RED MEN ON THE BIGHORN

COE HAYNE

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
presented by

GLEN H. BRADFORD

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RED MEN ON THE BIGHORN

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PLENTY CROWS (John Frost) AND CHIEF PLENTY COUPS
When at Washington, D. C., at Time of Burial of
Unknown Soldier

RED MEN ON THE BIGHORN

By COE HAYNE

Author of "By-paths to Forgotten Folks," "Race Grit," "For a New America"

Contains the Story of

SWIFT EAGLE

Based on Crow Legends
As Told by Plenty Crows (Red Neck)
To His Son Alvin

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To
ALL ROYAL AMBASSADORS
THEIR BOY SCOUT ALLIES
AND OTHER
TRAIL-MAKERS OF TOMORROW

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I

A VOW TO KILL THE SIOUX

"Let the young men speak for themselves."

At the close of the Civil War young men released suddenly from rigid military discipline sought outlets for their restless spirits on the western frontiers. Dr. John H. Frost, surgeon under the Union colors, was one who joined a shifting, leaderless army emigrating to Montana. There he met Strong Face, part-blood Indian, married her, took up ranching in the Yellowstone Valley, and practised medicine as opportunity afforded. He became the friend of Crow and government people alike, esteemed not only for his skill as a physician and surgeon but for his neighborliness and courage in the face of trying pioneer conditions.

One day in September, 1871, Doctor Frost was called to the Crow Indian Agency on Mission Creek to attend a white man employed there. In this emergency he rode alone as he often did, although Sioux war- and hunting-parties under the irreconcilable Sitting Bull had been making repeated raids along the proposed route of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Setting out with the doctor on his homeward journey back over the divide were two Indian women and a papoose. On this same day also, Chick Suis,

one of the doctor's brothers-in-law, left the agency with a band of horses and mules. Employed by the government as scout, interpreter, and horse-wrangler, Suis' destination on this detail was Benson's Landing on the Yellowstone. The Indian mother with the child in the doctor's tiny caravan was Suis' wife, Strike Three Times, whom he had married when she was the widow of the famous mulatto adventurer, Beckworth.

When not more than six miles from the agency Suis heard the report of a rifle in the hills on his left. More shots following in rapid succession convinced the scout that hostile Indians had come upon the trail of Doctor Frost and his companions and had waylaid them. He did not for an instant fool himself with the thought that the dust-cloud raised by the animals in his care had been unobserved. He changed his mount from the heavy-footed utility horse he was riding to a fleet-footed pony that habitually wore a halter for such an emergency. He did not tarry to shift bridle or saddle.

Out of the hills swept a war-party of Teton Sioux and began firing. With a superior horse under him the scout outdistanced his pursuers, the latter giving up the chase before coming within range of the small cannon surmounting the agency stockade. The band of horses and mules lately in the scout's care was driven off by the raiders. The agency was without protection, as the Crows were on a buffalo-hunt.

At dusk Chick located the bodies of the four victims of the raid and a wagon was sent out under guard to bring them in. Next day the scout rode

to the Upper Yellowstone country to notify his sister of the death of her husband.

Besides his widow, Doctor Frost left one child—a seven-months-old boy named after him. His mother called him Chicki (Little Son). Both were brought to the Crow Agency. Immediately after the burial of Doctor Frost, Chief Blackfoot promised that Strong Face and her son would be looked after always and be accorded full rights as members of the tribe, although their Indian blood was Piegan-Blackfeet. The word of the noted leader of the Crows was never broken.

The murder of Doctor Frost and his Crow companions on the trail was an incident in one of the many forays of the Sioux during their long struggle to regain a free domain of which the choice hunting-grounds of the Crows in Montana were a part. Driven out of Minnesota and restricted in the Dakotas they were in a desperate mood. They defied the United States Government to maintain military bases in the coveted valleys of the lower Bighorn and Tongue Rivers.

The massacre of Fetterman's command by Red Cloud's warriors and the subsequent abandonment of Forts Phil Kearney and C. F. Smith on the Bozeman Trail postponed the realization of the white man's dream of an open road to Montana. Red Cloud subsided and counseled peace, but the power of Sitting Bull was in the ascendancy. The latter rejected Red Cloud's overtures and gathered about him the disaffected bands under fearless leaders from the Sioux reservations. The Interior Depart-

ment in July, 1875, interpreted the situation as that of war and applied to the War Department for "force to punish the hostile Indians wherever found." Utterly defiant was Sitting Bull's reply to the order that all Indians off reservations "come in by or before January 31, 1876, or a military force would be sent to compel them." From his camp in the wilderness the Uncpapa medicine-man informed his white opponents that his trail was plain.

Word reached the Crows that their aid in the campaign against the marauding Sioux was desired by the "Great White Father" in Washington. The head men consented to hold a council with General Gibbon.

The Crows were assured by General Gibbon that if they wanted to make war upon the Sioux, drive them from their country, and get revenge for the Crows who had fallen, now was their time.

The chiefs sat silent with bowed heads. General Gibbon grew impatient by reason of the long wait before answer was made.

Old Crow spoke:

"You have said what you had to say; don't be too fast! We are studying within ourselves and will talk after awhile."

Blackfoot began to speak to his brother chiefs but requested that no part of what he said be interpreted for the whites. In an earnest fashion he spoke to Crazy Head, Spotted Horse, White Mouth, Old Crow, Old Dog, Bull That Goes Hunting, and the other principal Crow men in the council-room. Bull That Goes Hunting had the largest band of

followers, but Blackfoot was held to be the greatest chief. General Gibbon was told that the young Crow men must settle the matter for themselves, that the old chiefs could not speak for them. The enlistment of twenty-five Crow scouts was completed by the end of the following day, and Lieutenant James H. Bradley[1] was given command of them. Over half a century later, White Man Runs Him, last surviving scout who led Custer to the Sioux camp on the Little Bighorn, named his companions who volunteered to leave the Crow Agency with General Gibbon. They were: Shows His Face, Bull Rabbit, Little Face, Black-faced Coyote, Wolf, Corner of the Mouth, Two Whistle, Young Yellow Wolf, Swift Foot, Mountain That Shows, Spotted White Bird, Otter That Shows, Push Elk, Horse Heart, Ears That Show, Curley, Hairy Moccasin, Goes Ahead, White Man Runs Him, White Swan, Half Yellow Face. The six last named accompanied Custer. Mitch Bouyer, half-breed, and Tom Le Forge and Barney Bravo, white men, recruited from the Crow tribe, also served as scouts under Lieutenant Bradley.

The following brief entry in Lieutenant Bradley's *Journal,* reveals this officer's estimate of the character of the Crow scouts chosen by him to accompany General Custer on his march up the Rosebud

[1] Lieutenant Bradley was with the command of General Gibbon in the expedition against the hostile Sioux in 1876, and commanded a mounted detachment of the Seventh Infantry during the campaign against the Nez Perces the following year. He was killed August 9, 1877, in a charge against the camp of Chief Joseph and his band at the Big Hole, Montana.—*Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana,* Vol. II.

toward the reported site of Sitting Bull's camp on the Little Bighorn:

> He [Custer] is provided with Indian scouts [Arickaree], but from the superior knowledge possessed by the Crows of the country he is to traverse, it was decided to furnish him with a part of ours, and I was directed to make a detail for that purpose. I selected my six best men, and they joined him at the mouth of the Rosebud. Our guide, Mitch Bouyer, accompanies him also. This leaves us wholly without a guide, while Custer has one of the very best that the country affords. Surely he is being afforded every facility to make a successful pursuit.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the Crows led Custer to Sitting Bull. There are certain details covering the Crows' participation in the campaign as a whole that are not so familiar.

Little Face, one of the Crow scouts with Lieutenant Bradley, by his intimate knowledge of the broken terrain east of the Bighorn, was able to extricate General Gibbon's battalion from a well-nigh hopeless situation late one night while the column was moving up the river to join Custer. As described by Lieutenant Bradley in his *Journal*, Little Face was a "good fellow who will do all he can." It would seem that his competent work as pathfinder, after certain cavalry officers, acting as guides, had lost the way, had a direct bearing upon the ultimate arrival of reenforcements in the vicinity of the battle-field in the valley of the Little Bighorn in time to raise the siege and prevent a disaster on "Reno's Hill" comparable to that on "Custer's Hill." Lieutenant Bradley's story of the exploit of Little Face, taken from an entry in this officer's

Journal, dated Sunday, June 25, 1876 (the day Custer was wiped out), follows:

Darkness overtook us still pushing on up the Bighorn, though the march had been difficult by day it was doubly so in the darkness of the night. The cavalry officers who scouted up the Bighorn last April were acting as guides, for want of better, and, as their knowledge of the country was far from profound, were continually encountering serious obstacles to our march—now a precipitous hillside, now a deep ravine. Occasionally as the head of the column was checked we would find ourselves closed up in a dense mass, and again where the path grew narrow we would stretch out in an attenuated thread, the men in the rear racing desperately after those in front not to lose sight of them in the gloom and be left without a clue to the direction they had taken. Every now and then a long halt was made, as an avenue of escape was sought from some topographical net in which we had become involved.

There was great danger at times, when the column stretched out to unusual length, that it would become broken and leave us scattered over the country in a dozen bewildered fragments, and once the cry did go up, "The battery is missing!" A halt was made, and after some racing and hallooing the missing guns were set right again, having lost the human thread, and so wandered a mile or so out of the way. At another time some of the cavalry went astray, and lost half an hour getting back to us.

At length after hours of such toil, getting out of one difficulty only to plunge at once into another, the head of the column came plump on the brink of a precipice at whose foot swept the roaring waters of the Bighorn. The water gleamed in front a hundred and fifty feet below, and to the right hand and to the left the ground broke off into a steep declivity down which nothing could be seen but forbidding gloom. Our cavalry guides were wholly bewildered, and everybody was tired out, and dripping with wet, and impatient to get somewhere and rest. When General Terry

saw the walls of Fort Fisher before him he knew what to do. He threw his battalions against them, carried them by storm, and gained a glorious victory and won a star; but when he saw to what a pass we had now come and reflected that every step we took seemed only to render our situation more perplexing, he appeared uncertain and irresolute. For several minutes we sat our horses looking by turn at the water and into the black ravines, when I ventured to suggest to the General that we trust ourselves to the guidance of Little Face, one of my Crow scouts who had roamed this country as a boy fifty years ago and had previously assured me that he knew every foot of it. Little Face was called up, said he could guide us to a good camping-ground, was accepted as a guide, and led off in the dark with as much confidence as though he was in the full light of day. The aimless, profitless scrambling was over; he conducted us by an easy route a mile or two to the left, where we found ourselves in a commodious valley with water enough in its little channel to suffice for drinking purposes. There was not much grass for the animals, but it was the best we could do without going several miles farther and so about midnight we halted, unsaddled, and threw our weary forms down on the ground for a little rest, the cavalry having marched about thirty-five miles and my detachment, in consequence of its diversions [scouting duty] from the main column, about fifty-five.

At sun-up on the morning of June 26, without eating breakfast, Lieutenant Bradley was on the move once more with his scouts. When the fresh tracks of four ponies were discovered in a ravine, and smoke was observed arising in their front, Lieutenant Bradley concluded that he was approaching the Sioux village. The trail of the horses was followed two miles when the Bighorn River was reached. Here one horse was found, and several

articles of personal equipment recognized as belonging to some of the Crows who had been detailed to accompany General Custer. While examining these evidences of a hasty flight, three Indians were discovered on the opposite bank of the Bighorn. A peace parley was carried on by means of blankets and smoke columns, and the three men turned back. Little Face talked with the fugitives across the river. Consequently the first recital of the story of the annihilation of Custer and his command came to the supporting troops from the lips of White Man Runs Him, Hairy Moccasin, and Goes Ahead, who had remained with Custer long enough to carry away a knowledge of some of the ghastly details of the battle.[2] The news was carried back to General Terry by Lieutenant Bradley personally. Word was sent to General Gibbon to hurry the infantry forward, and the entire column, infantry and cavalry, then moved ahead and on the morning of the twenty-seventh joined the hard-pressed Reno on the bluffs above the Little Bighorn. By this time Sitting Bull was hurrying southward toward the Bighorn Mountains, having no stomach for a battle with fresh troops.

Shortly after ten o'clock on the morning of June 27, at least twenty-eight hours after Lieutenant Bradley communicated with the three Crow scouts, Curley, reported missing by the three scouts in question,[3] brought news of the defeat of Custer to

[2] When the Crows were recruited as scouts they were told by General Gibbon that they would not be expected to engage in actual battle with the hostiles.—Lieut. James H. Bradley's *Journal.*

[3] Lieutenant Bradley's *Journal.*

the *Far West* lying at the mouth of the Little Bighorn.[4]

Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Terry, in his report of the battle of the Little Bighorn, stated: "The scouts (under Bradley) sent out at half-past four on the morning of the 26th . . . discovered Indians, who were at first supposed to be Sioux, but when taken they proved to be Crows, who had been with General Custer. They brought the first intelligence of the battle."

On a June day, nearly three months after their departure, the scouts returned to the tribal camp with news that filled the Crows with alarm. Custer and his entire immediate command killed by the Sioux! The camp was told that on the same fateful day—June 25, 1876—Reno had been defeated and chased to the bluffs above the Little Bighorn where doubtless he would have shared Custer's fate on the twenty-seventh, had it not been for the timely arrival of troops under Terry and Gibbon.

The Bighorn country was swarming with the

[4] Joseph Mills Hanson, in *The Conquest of the Missouri*, (McClurg, 1910), states (p. 279) that the account Curley brought to the *Far West* on the morning of June 27 was the first given to white men by an eye-witness. A statement made to the writer in December, 1928, by White Man Runs Him when the latter was describing his flight from the battle-field to the Bighorn where he and his two companions were discovered by Lieutenant Bradley, led to a study of Lieutenant Bradley's *Journal*, wherein may be found information that does not appear to substantiate the contention of Hanson. Hanson states that Lieutenant Bradley encountered the three scouts on the morning of June 27. Lieutenant Bradley records in his *Journal* that he received the news of Custer's defeat from the three scouts soon after sun-up on the twenty-sixth. White Man Runs Him told the writer that Goes Ahead, Hairy Moccasin, Curley, and he were with Custer, and that Yellow Face and White Swan were detailed to accompany Reno when the two generals separated just before the engagement with the Sioux.

exultant Sioux and their allies. Mitch Bouyer, noted guide and part-blood Sioux, who had been brought into the Crow country by the Suis family, had died fighting by Custer's side. He had been held in high esteem by the Crows. The lament of the old men and the death-chants of the war widows could not be hushed in the camp. The Crows could not blacken their faces as a token of revenge accomplished.

Crow scouts were wanted by their white soldier friends to follow the trails of Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Gall, and American Horse. In the council-lodges Chief Blackfoot reminded the under-chiefs that the enemies of the white men were also the enemies of the Absaroka. But he would not order his young men to go. They must decide for themselves. It fell out that many enlistments occurred within a few hours after the camp crier heralded the decision of the council.

Early one morning Strong Face stood with Little Son on a hill overlooking the Crow camp. Crimson edging the eastern ridges was the Indian woman's call to worship. With arms uplifted toward the blazing manifestation of the power of her god she chanted a song of mourning. Tears flowed down her face unchecked as she surrendered to her grief. Alternately weeping and praying she gave expression not only to grief but to her hatred of those who had killed her husband. Her mourning throughout was a religious ceremony, as are many common activities in the life of an Indian, and on this occasion was marked by a terrible sacrifice.

The time had come for her to dedicate her son to a life of bloodshed and plant in his soul forever the spirit of revenge. She prayed that he might become a warrior of courage and sure marksmanship, that he might kill her enemies.

Tall and strong she towered above the child that morning, seeking to impart to him something of the hatred that burned in her heart:

"Promise me that some day you will kill a Sioux that the death of your father may be avenged."

With his arms extended toward the sun the boy made the vow and Strong Face invoked upon him the blessing of the beloved orb of fire.

II

THE TRAINING OF A CROW

"Be brave, clean men, so that you may stand before your people as their leaders, and above all, never disgrace your fathers."

John—or "Red Neck," as he was called by the Indians by reason of a birthmark[1]—was taught by his mother to speak the Blackfeet, Piegan, and Crow languages; he learned English from the soldiers, agency employees, and traders. By the time he was seven years old he was in demand as an interpreter. Chief Blackfoot had a special liking for him and found that Red Neck could be relied upon. The boy interpreted accurately what was told to him. He remembers being carried from his home by the old chief to the store of the licensed Indian trader and placed upon the counter, there to remain all day to impart to the trader the wants of the Indians and to Indians the prices of articles desired. At night he would be sent back to his mother with canned goods for the table. This experience gave him an early insight into tribal and government affairs, as well as enabled him to bring food to his mother's cabin.

The youthful Red Neck was initiated into the ways of the Indian. He learned the Crow and

[1] John Frost was called Red Neck by the Crow Indians until 1927, when he was given the name of Plenty Crows by Chief Plenty Coups. (See Chapter X.)

Blackfeet legends, and with his mother worshiped the force that resided in the sun, the lightning, the rivers, and the rocks. He heard the many tales concerning the Maker of first things that appeared in the form of a coyote. Sometimes he was told that Old Man Coyote was all-powerful, and then at other times he laughed with the story-teller when Old Man Coyote was shown to be weak and silly like a child. He learned to ride a horse bareback; to shoot expertly with bow and rifle; to track the deer and bear which were abundant in the Bighorn Mountains. The mountain forests and streams, the deep cañons, the open prairies, became home to him.

Johnny and Chick Suis, as well as some of their Crow friends, were active during the Nez Perces and Bannock uprisings as scouts for the United States Government. Intercessory prayers for their safety were made by the scouts' relatives to the sun and to mother earth. One day Red Neck went with Strong Face to a hill for fasting and worship with Chief Blackfoot and other Crows, and was there accorded a distinct honor according to the Indian custom.

"My son, are you willing to give a piece of your own flesh as an offering to the Great Spirit?" she asked.

Blood was flowing from self-inflicted wounds on the bodies of the sun-worshipers. Blood was flowing from the arms of Strong Face, as devout as any man or woman in the tribe. Red Neck bared his arm, and Big Forehead, one of the old Crows, received his gift to appease the supernatural powers

EX-SCOUT CHICK SUIS

At Favorite Old-time Camp Site of Crows on Pryor Creek

that were supposed to control the destinies of fighting men. At the point where the skin was raised by a thorn point, the votive offering was cut off. The boy's bit of flesh was placed with similar contributions in a shallow hole in the earth that nourishes and protects, and over the sacrifice Blackfoot sprinkled sacred tobacco and offered a prayer.

"Dear sun," invoked Blackfoot, "we give you this as a sacrifice from our bodies that those who are away in wars may be victorious and return safely."

Red Neck was shown that it was not the way of an Indian to whimper because of a physical pain. On the long hunts he achieved bodily endurance. He saw how the fruits of the hunt were brought to the chief's lodge in the center of the camp and there equally distributed. When sudden misfortune overtook a family, like the burning of a tepee and all of its furnishings, he learned by observation that in no time at all other members of the tribal band would contribute hides, lodge-poles, blankets, saddles, food, clothing, and other necessities so that the losers often would be the gainers in the end. He learned that when something valuable, like a horse, was found, or when a deer was shot when game was scarce, such things were given by the one who acquired them to some friend; that it was not the part of a good Crow to withhold any good thing from a tribesman; that when a Crow gave his friend a present he gave the best of the things that he possessed.

Red Neck was adopted by Chief Blackfoot as his son, a high honor. The ceremony was performed in

front of Blackfoot's lodge at a time when many Crows were camping outside the stockade of the Absaroka agency. Blackfoot spoke with deep feeling on this occasion. In a constant warfare with roaming hostile bands he had won his position as headman by virtue of actual achievement as a warrior and counselor. As an orator he was unsurpassed by any other Crow of his time.[2]

The chief presented Red Neck with a complete suit of buckskin. The shirt, leggings, and moccasins were handsomely beaded. In this regalia the boy was clad when Blackfoot formally adopted him as *ee-ra-sha* (son). Blackfoot gave Red Neck his own medicine "The Sun." The sacred object was a shell bearing a painting of a red sun on a yellow background and encased in buckskin. The medicine was suspended from the boy's neck by a leather thong with the admonition to wear it on his left side during times of special danger.

"Wear my medicine, and live as I have lived," said Blackfoot in his address to Red Neck. "Wear it with honor to those who have preceded you, our fathers. Live for my people. That is a chief's desire and prayer."

A year later Red Neck's people memorialized the adoption ceremony by presenting a mule to Blackfoot. Mules were prized by the Crows in preference to horses in the work of dragging lodge-poles.

Strong Face and her people were camped one fall on Trout Creek, tributary to the Stillwater, to obtain a winter's supply of meat. Game was plentiful in

[2] *Contributions to the Montana Historical Society*, Vol. II.

the Beartooth Range. Blacktail deer, elk, mountain sheep, and bear fell victims to the marksmanship of these skilled hunters. Johnny, Chick, and Charlie Suis were competent on the game trails. All the meat and skins were prepared by the women. Members of the party were Chief Black Bear and his family who were visiting in the Crow country. Black Bear was a Piegan-Blackfeet, half-brother of Grandmother Suis (Shield Woman) and old enough to be excused from the chase. He bore upon his broad face and body the scars obtained in many battles with man and beast. He would sit alone during long periods of the day upon some prominent hilltop, in sight of camp, smoking and holding silent communion with his memories and the mountains, rocks, trees, and streams. About the lodge-fire at night he was the story-teller. Famous also as a narrator of Indian legends was his old wife Plenty Snakes, whose audiences were the children of the camp.

Leader among the boys of the camp by reason of his age was Medicine Owl, Black Bear's son, and Red Neck was his eager competitor in feats of skill and endurance, including horseback-riding, long-distance running, and shooting with bow and arrows.

The boys of the camp, late one afternoon, were catching fish by the simple expedient of holding bags at the lower end of openings they made in a beaver-dam, when Strong Face suddenly appeared on the bank to summon them to Black Bear's lodge. The tone of her voice conveyed the news that a matter

of great importance was pending. There was no tarrying.

When Red Neck passed his mother he asked her what Black Bear wanted. He was told that the men had returned from the hunt with the heart of a bear that had fought bravely for its life. This large cinnamon bear had charged the hunters repeatedly, showing no fear, making no backward move, until he fell in death.

"Black Bear knows that the bear was brave and wishes to have a ceremony. You will be told to eat some of the bear's heart raw," said Strong Face.

The three or four boys in camp who were old enough to sense the meaning of the ceremony were told to sit down opposite the opening of Black Bear's lodge, this being the place of honor in any tepee, occupied by the head of the household on all ordinary occasions but assigned to preferred guests. An old-time Indian tepee always faced the east. Black Bear began the ceremony by sprinkling cedar leaves on the coals in the center of the lodge. In the sacred incense he held his hands for a moment and then by a swift motion wafted the smoke toward the boys for their purification. He also touched each boy's head with his hand freshly bathed each time in the cleansing smoke. The blessing of the sun was invoked upon the heart when the chief extended it toward the sky, toward mother earth, and then toward the east, west, north, and south. Each morsel of meat, about the size of a thimble, was stuck on the end of a stick, held in the smoke, blessed, and placed in a boy's mouth without a hand

touching it. The boys were ordered to swallow the "strong medicine" whole.

"May you have the courage possessed by the one who bore this heart," the chief instructed the boys. "Be brave, clean men so that you may stand before your people as their leaders, and above all never disgrace your fathers."

Black Bear prayed: "Dear sun, have pity and mercy on me and grant that these things may be fulfilled in the way my heart desires."

The initiation closed with a smoking ceremony. A circle was formed by the adult male Indians, and the sacred medicine-pipe, after being blessed by the sun, was started by Black Bear on the round toward the man on his left. The last man to have a smoke returned the pipe to Black Bear, not by handing it directly to the chief but to the man on his right, and thus all the way back to the starting-point. Four times the pipe went the round by the same route. It is exceedingly bad medicine for an Indian to smoke a pipe that comes to him from the left.

After the ordeal in Black Bear's lodge the boys under Medicine Owl's leadership put themselves through several tests to prove their courage. Crossing Trout Creek on slippery rocks where the swift waters dashed white against them was the first test. The reputed worth of the raw heart of a bear to make an Indian brave was put to an unusual test a few days later when one of the boys found a large wasps' nest hanging from the limb of a tree. The young sportsmen stumped one another by running beneath the nest after it had been dealt a blow with

a stick. When the contestants had allowed themselves to be stung a sufficient number of times to prove their manhood, a Blackfeet maiden, Medicine Owl's sister, named Bear Woman, put the would-be braves out of business.

"Come, follow me if you wish to show how brave you are," she challenged.

The girl walked up to the nest, hit it smartly with a stick, and stood beneath it. While the wasps swarmed about and stung her repeatedly, she called scornfully to the boys to join her. No one volunteered to stand beside her.

A rigid training in the hardships of camp life and the hunting trails was afforded Red Neck by Grandfather Suis and Uncles Johnny, Chick, and Charlie Suis.

One fall the men were trapping and hunting on Lower Deer Creek, making their home in a small log hut with thatched roof and dirt floor. Raids into Crow territory by horse-stealing bands from northern tribes were frequent. The Suis family owned a band of valuable cream-colored horses which were coveted by some Flathead Indians. Although the horse herd was driven in close to camp every evening the thieves succeeded in running them off one night, leaving their owners absolutely without mounts. When the latter were awakened by the sound of the pounding feet of their swiftly receding herd, they started after them afoot. The Flatheads fled with their stolen property down the Lower Deer Creek to the Yellowstone and up the broader valley. They succeeded in getting away with all of

the horses but did not count on being delayed by flood waters in Boulder River. The horses balked at the ford. They became unmanageable by reason of the rifle-fire of the pursuers. The latter shot two of the raiders just at daybreak as they emerged from the water on the opposite bank of the Boulder. The third member of the robber band escaped.

While old man Suis and two of his sons rounded up the stock, a third son rode back to get the boy, Red Neck, who had been hidden among some rocks near Deer Creek. Attracted by the cracking of rifles several Crows belonging to a large camp above the Yellowstone came upon the scene in time to win *coups* by scalping the dead Flatheads. Red Neck did not enjoy that ghastly sight.

Indian influences predominating in the boy's life made deep and abiding impressions upon him. He became a part of the great wilderness which was home to him. When Johnny Suis went to a high hill above Deer Creek to fast four days and four nights his wailing, heard far down in the valley, struck a responsive chord in the boy's heart.

Later, while hunting horses in the mountains, Red Neck happened upon the bed of evergreen boughs on which John Suis lay when he received his alleged vision or message from the Great Spirit. The boy desired an experience like that, and so informed his people. One day he left camp with the intention of fasting where his uncle claimed he had succeeded in penetrating the veil of the spirit world.

Alone after nightfall in this eerie sanctuary, the youth soon had a great desire to be elsewhere. Mys-

terious voices from the Unknown seemed to come to him as the wind sang its mournful song in the pines. Inanimate objects assumed terrifying shapes as he viewed them in the darkness. He could not escape from the high place without incurring grave risks down the rocky declivities and along the narrow ledges rimming the black ravines that lay beneath him and the familiar valley trails. When the gray gloom lifted in the east he got out of that place.

III

SWIFT EAGLE

"It is better to die young fighting for your people, than to live to be old and be a coward."

In camp, when the fires burned low and men spoke with soft voices, Red Neck often listened to the tribal legends.

"Do you hear them?" asked Plenty Coups as the boy lay on his saddle blanket near him one evening beside Pryor Creek where it ran musically beneath Arrow Head Rock.

"What do you hear?" asked Red Neck.

"The speaking river," said the chief. "I hear the music and voices of many camps of long ago."

The boy listened and imagined he could hear the mysterious, calling voices—the strong call of the tribe. Down through the centuries his fathers had responded to it—the dream and the glory of great adventure sung about the camp-fire at night. Plenty Coups was a famous story-teller. In later years Red Neck (known as John Frost among the whites) related in his own way the Crow tribal stories to his children.

From the creek on either side sloped pasture lands cut by many game trails. Beyond towered castellated rocks, gray and bald, on which Indian young men of other days watched to protect the Crow camps in the valley.

Swift Eagle

The Story Red Neck Told His Son Alvin When the Snows Lay Deep on the Bighorn During the Winter of 1928-1929

Swift Eagle was being trained by his father, who was a Crow chief and warrior. The father found his boy to be a willing learner who went after everything he had to do with all his might and never complained. Like any Northwestern Indian boy, he began the training for his life-work at the age of two years, when he was taken for his morning bath in the river or creek. This was done every morning, winter and summer, until he acquired the habit. Next he was taught to ride horseback. He was tied on at first, beginning at three or four years of age, and his father or elder brother led the horse and instructed him how to guide him. Then he was turned loose, still tied on, until he was able to manage his horse. He was now ready for his work of herding horses. There came a day when no Indian out-shone him as a horseman.

The father was proud of Swift Eagle. He called all his tribesmen together and told them of his son who could swim, run for miles without tiring, jump, ride horseback, and shoot well. So all the boys of his age, twelve years and some even older, were called together. All the chiefs brought their sons, and the medicine-men also brought theirs. A big feast was given by Swift Eagle's father; then the contest began. The first was swimming the Elk

River[1] in which Swift Eagle won easily, out of thirty who entered. Next was a long-distance foot race. Again there were a large number who entered and again Swift Eagle was first. Chief Bad Heart's son came in second. Then the horseback riding was next. It was a tie between Swift Eagle and Bad Heart's son, Short Bull. Swift Eagle told his father to give it to Short Bull; that he did not want to be first in everything. Next was shooting at a mark with bows and arrows. Little Day Light took first honor and Swift Eagle second. Again they shot their bows and arrows for the great distance. Swift Eagle shot his arrow twenty-five steps farther than did all the others who took part. So the contest closed for the day.

They had a big victory dance, and Swift Eagle was the hero of the day. Short Bull and his father were both jealous of Swift Eagle. The camp was all wrought up over the day's contest. Chief Pretty Eagle put Swift Eagle on a horse and led him around, singing his praise and telling what he had done. Then the fire was lit in the center of the camp, the dance circle was formed, and the old men smoked the medicine-pipe. They sang their worship songs and prayed to the Great Spirit for Swift Eagle's safekeeping till manhood, that he might make a great leader against the enemy, who outnumbered them twenty to one. Then the dance followed with Swift Eagle leading. This ended the ceremony.

[1] Elk River is now the Yellowstone. All names are those used by the Indian people of the Northwest.

Swift Eagle loved to hunt. He would be seen along the river-bottom hunting rabbits nearly every day. He studied their habits so that when he found a fresh track he was sure of his game. It was nothing for him to go out in the morning after a snow and bring to camp eight or ten jack-rabbits. He learned that the rabbit will follow a beaten path sometimes two or three miles long, which is made during the night. He will follow this until he wants to hide for the day. Then he will jump from the path three or four steps to a bunch of greasewood or sage-brush which he chooses for his hiding-place. So Swift Eagle would follow the beaten path and watch on each side for sage-brush or a likely place for a rabbit to hide. He was sure to find him.

When he began to hunt large game he studied it, too. When he jumped a white-tailed deer and it ran into the willows, which are its natural haunts, he soon found that the deer would stand in the thicket and watch its back-trail. When Swift Eagle would come in sight of the deer and stop, it would jump out of sight and run for other shelter; but if Swift Eagle kept moving, the deer, although in plain sight, would not run. So Swift Eagle trained his hunting-horse to keep on moving while he shot from him at the game. Swift Eagle soon began to bring in deer as he did rabbits.

After this he wanted to hunt mountain or black-tailed deer. He tried the same system that he used for the river deer, but he could not get any game. Once when he had hunted all day and was tired, he sat on the side of the mountain, looking across a

little basin between two high hills, and what did he see but a band of black-tailed deer coming up from the lower end of the basin! So he thought, "Here is my chance to learn how black-tailed deer feed and go to their bed-ground." He watched every move they made until nightfall. Soon the moon came up bright as day; so he watched all their movements. At daybreak they ran down to a creek single file and drank their fill. Then they climbed to the highest peak, and from there they went to the side of the mountain where they could watch this point; there they made their bed-ground for the day, one of their number keeping guard.

While Swift Eagle was still debating with himself what to do, a pack of wolves came running on the trail of the deer he had been watching, so he waited for results. He soon saw the wolves climb the high point on a swift run. They had not more than reached the point before the deer jumped and ran down to the creek. The wolves followed the track until they came to the creek, and then they lost the scent and of course lost the deer. Swift Eagle followed down to the creek. He did not know which way the deer had gone, so he went up and down the creek until he found a log fallen across the creek on which the deer had left a wet place as they jumped over it. So Swift Eagle learned how to hunt black-tailed deer. After this when he was trailing them, and they made for a high point, he would not go up there, but instead he would begin to hunt the country around this high point, and nine out of ten times he would find the deer watching their

back-trail or the high ground on which they made their track.

Swift Eagle learned how to flag the antelope. He learned how to make the bull-moose call out of the hollow stalk of the ripe wild rhubarb. Many other secrets of the hunting trails he learned while he was young.

While Swift Eagle was still in his eighteenth year his father was killed in a fight with the enemy, so that left him and his younger brother and mother, and it fell to him to support his mother and brother.

Swift Eagle felt badly. He cried much over the loss of his father. After weeping and wailing all day, he came to his home. Once it had been the best and largest tepee owned by the members of his tribe. Now it was just a little tepee, scarcely large enough to hold his brother and mother and himself, because it was the custom among Indians at that time [2] if the head of the family died, to give away everything in the tepee and the tepee itself, sometimes leaving the mourners with just what they had on their backs. So Swift Eagle came back to a very small tepee, and he told his mother that he was going out on the mountain to fast and try to gain favors from some of the many message-carriers of the Great Spirit to help make him a worthy son of a chief, and to make him a better hunter.

At this time they were camped near the head-waters of what is now called Arrow Rock Creek. So the next morning he took his father's medicine-pipe and climbed up one of the high points which

[2] Many of the Crow Indians still hold to this custom.

are now called Castle Rocks. Here he fasted four days, neither eating nor drinking. On the fourth night, in a vision, a bear came to him and said:

"My son, I heard your cries and prayers, and I have come to you. What is it you want most?"

Swift Eagle answered, "I want to be useful to my people as long as I live."

"Well then, my son," said the bear, "you have a hard task before you. It takes a brave heart, a heart not easily discouraged, firm and yet kind, but I believe you have all these qualities.

"Now I shall give you two things. One is the sunrise root. This will tell where you are when the sun and stars cannot be seen. Here is the herb, which you will see is a wintergreen. It grows on the mountains and prairies as well. Try it, and you will find it has one main root, and all the branches grow from only one side, and that is from the side on which the sun rises. By it you can find your bearings when on long trips. That is the first thing.

"The other is this: when you find deer tracks, you should be able to tell whether they are freshly made or not. If freshly made you will not find any frost in them, that is, not within a day and night. After a day and night, frost will form in them, but not until then."

From this time forward, Swift Eagle's spirit guide was a bear. Although the fast left him tired and thirsty, yet he went home happy, because he had been recognized by the Great Spirit.

After Swift Eagle had rested from his fast, the chief of the camp invited him to his tepee. When

they had partaken of choice meats, the chief who was an old friend of Swift Eagle's father, said:

"My son, you know it is the custom for a father to make a match for his son when he is eighteen years of age, or older. In so doing, the father buys his son the first wife. Will you allow me to take the place of my dead friend, your father?"

Swift Eagle, with tears rolling down his cheeks, said: "Let me mourn my father's death first; then I shall give you my answer. Ah, Good Horse, you touch my heart! I have spoken." He went out of the chief's tepee with a heart full of gratitude. Instead of going home he wandered around the camp, a thing which he hardly ever did. As he came near a small tepee, he could hear an old woman talking to a crying boy. The old grandmother was saying, "Oh, my poor child, I have nothing to feed you!" Then she began to weep, also. Swift Eagle went directly home and told his mother to take some choke-cherry soup and some meat to the old woman's tepee. When she had done so she found the old woman greatly in need. After this Swift Eagle kept her in meat so that she was never again in need. Then he made a vow that if he ever became chief he should remedy this so that no one would become hungry in camp. Just how it could be done he did not know, but he believed it could be planned.

He thought seriously about being chief. It was no easy matter to become one for there were many requirements. First, he had to go with a war-party, steal into the camp of the enemy, and cut loose their horses from the post or stake to which they were

tied. He knew the horses would snort and the dogs would bark as they approached, and that sometimes men were killed in the camp. But he knew also that the man who stole a horse and escaped had won a *coup*. Another *coup* was to be won by engaging in war and killing one of the enemy. Third, he should take or be the first to touch the gun of the enemy after he had been killed. By being at the head of a war-party, and showing his ability in leadership he could win another *coup*, or by defeating the enemy and taking their mounts away from them. The last method of winning a *coup* was to divorce not less than four women, which he felt was the worst of all. He knew that there was much ahead of him before he could become chief, but he had determined to help his people, and he would not flinch. As he thought about these things he stood at the edge of the camp watching the horses as they grazed, and enjoying the natural beauties around him. He thanked the Great Spirit for his life and for his spirit guide, the bear. Then he walked back across the camp, taking special notice of the fine horses staked at their masters' tepees, and comparing each with his own. After all his was the finest in camp, a horse worthy of a chief's ownership, and another token of the favor of the Great Spirit.

Of all the maidens in the camp, Swift Eagle thought most of Blue Bird. When he went out on a hillside in the evening with other young men to serenade the camp with his flute made of a hollow twig, his love call was for Blue Bird. Pretending not to hear, yet lured by his music, the girl would

come out of her tepee and stand where her lover could see her. Then he would know that something in her heart answered the longing in his heart.

One morning, just at the start of the day, the alarm was given, "Horses stolen!" Every one jumped on his best horse and went to the center of the camp, where the chief awaited them. When all were there the chief took command, leaving enough warriors to protect the camp. Just before they started, the old woman to whom Swift Eagle had sent food, came singing her medicine song. Every one stopped to see what she wanted. She called for Swift Eagle and gave him a little buckskin bag the size of a plum. She told him when he started on a long-distance run, to tie this to his war-bridle so that it would be in his horse's mouth. She said it would give the horse extra endurance. Then the chase began. The warriors rode all day, all night, all the next day until it was again night. Many turned back so that at sun-down the chief and about twenty others were all that remained. The chief told his party that they would rest until morning, so all lay down for the night.

About midnight Swift Eagle awoke, and heard a horse whinny up the river, so he took his gun and went out on a scouting trip. He had not gone far when he saw against the skyline a horse on a hill. He approached the horse silently and saw something lying near by. He drew his gun and walked closer. He could hear snoring, so he crept up to the man, disarmed him, cut the rope which fastened the horse, and led him away. The scout was still asleep, and

he thought he could safely take the rest of the stolen horses which he could hear at the foot of the hill. He quickly gathered them and drove them to his party. Then he awoke the chief and told him he had left the enemy afoot. He showed the gun he had taken from the sleeping sentinel. Chief Pretty Eagle asked him why he had not killed the man. He answered, "It is better to bring all the horses back and leave no one hurt."

When morning came they charged on the place where the enemy had camped, but no one was there, so they started home with all the horses. As they went they placed their hero, Swift Eagle, in the lead and sang their victory song. When they reached home all that could be heard was the name Swift Eagle. He had won two points toward becoming chief. He had taken the enemy's horses, and he had taken the gun from the enemy without even wounding him. This was a rare feat. Not another man, young or old, was like him.

The man whose life Swift Eagle had spared, was the son of a famous chief of the Shoshone Indians. When he returned home he asked his father if it could be arranged so that their tribe and the Crows might make peace. Chief Washakee then sent runners to the Crows, saying that he would like to make peace with them, and join forces against the Sioux. They gathered in ceremony and smoked the pipe of peace at the mouth of the Bighorn River. Red Fox who was Chief Washakee's son, was a very handsome young man and much admired. As son of the chief he gave a feast, inviting all those who

had taken part in the war-party in which Swift Eagle had disarmed and dismounted him, sparing his life. At his tepee they all feasted, and after smoking the pipe of peace in silence and prayer, Red Fox asked the Crows which one of them disarmed him, sparing his life, while he slept. Chief Pretty Eagle, pointing to Swift Eagle, said, "That young man."

Red Fox arose, took Swift Eagle by the hand, and said: "My brother, my friend, so long as the sun rises in the morning and sets at night my friendship shall never cease. I have spoken from my heart. Out there stands my best horse. When you return home take him as your own. On him you will find the full regalia of a chief, from foot to head, which you have earned with honor. When you sit upon the skin of the mountain-lion which is on the saddle, you will be sitting upon strength. The eagle feather which you will wear upon your head, will give you speed to act. This means that you, Swift Eagle, have power over others and will rule in a short time. I have spoken."

Swift Eagle and Red Fox became great friends. Red Fox and his people were mountain Indians, while Swift Eagle and his people, the Crows, were prairie Indians. Swift Eagle and his mother and brother went to the mountains as guests of the Shoshones. Red Fox taught Swift Eagle the ways of the mountains, and Swift Eagle soon saw the advantage of wintering there. Fuel was plentiful, the grass was better for their horses. The winters were not nearly so cold as on the plains because

there was more shelter, and the chinook winds kept the ground free from snow so that the horses wintered finely. Also there were plenty of elk and deer for food. You will learn that later Swift Eagle induced his people to move into the mountains, while others of the Crow tribe remained on the plains. So there are today the Mountain Crows and the River Crows. Peace existed between the Mountain Crows and the Shoshones from this time onward.

From their winter camp a war-party of Crows went to raid the Blackfeet near the headwaters of the Missouri River. Swift Eagle and his brother were both in the party. They were successful in capturing the horses of their enemies, the Blackfeet, who were camped on the Musselshell River near the foot of the Snowy Mountains. The Blackfeet gave chase, and the Crow party, which was led by Black Bear, was caught in the Hail Stone Basin. There they fought, and the Crows were defeated, losing all their horses.

Swift Eagle was shot and his leg broken. His friends carried him across the Elk River.[3] Here they killed buffalo, and out of the skins made him a tepee, setting it near the water. Then they dried the meat, and carried plenty of wood, providing him with everything needed. When all was arranged they made ready to leave him. Black Bear took the medicine pipe and filled it. As he held the stem of the pipe up to the Great Spirit, all bowed their heads in silent prayer. Black Bear smoked and passed the pipe to the one on his left, toward the

[3] Where Billings is located on the Yellowstone River.

west. When the last one had smoked the pipe it was passed back to Black Bear, the warriors having smoked during those few minutes from the rising of the sun to the setting of the sun, with the Great Spirit. They sang their war-song, and, with tears streaming down their cheeks, they left.

Swift Eagle sang his death-song in these words: "It is better to die young, fighting for your people, than to live to be old and be a coward." When his brother heard him he refused to leave Swift Eagle alone. He turned back and begged to stay, but Swift Eagle told his young brother to go home to their mother, for she was alone, and there was no one to hunt for her or herd her horses. He must go.

The young brother went with sorrow in his heart, hurrying until he caught the rest of the party. They traveled all day, so at nightfall they stopped to rest. When every one was asleep and all was still, Swift Eagle's brother arose and back-tracked to the place where they left his brother. He traveled all night and part of the next day.

Finally he came to the top of a knoll above his brother's camp, and began to sing, "It is better to die with the one you love than to live to be old."

Swift Eagle answered: "Come, Spotted Horse, my brave brother, I love you. We shall die together."

Together they camped on the bank of the Elk River.

IV

SWIFT EAGLE (CONTINUED)

"I thought a great deal and talked with the Great Spirit, asking him to give me knowledge."

The war-party to which Swift Eagle and his brother belonged, reached the mouth of the Elk River just at daybreak and went into camp with the wail and cry of defeated warriors. They were taken into the center of camp and there told their story of leaving Swift Eagle to die, and of his brother's disappearance the first night on the trail after leaving the wounded one. Sadness had come into the camp, but had not entered all hearts.

Pretty Eagle, who was a chief, greatly desired the much sought and very beautiful girl, Blue Bird. He gave four buffalo horses, an elk-tooth dress, a chief's war-bonnet and ermine coat to her father, and was accepted, on this the day of the war-party's return. But Blue Bird had no notion of accepting him. She went about as usual until the day before she was to go to her new home. Then she sought Black Bear, the chief of the war-party who had left Swift Eagle on Elk River. She first gave Black Bear a pipe and tobacco.

"Great chief," she said, "I want you to keep this meeting of ours secret. Do not tell any one that you saw me. Tell me just where you left Swift Eagle and how I should go to find his camp."

"My brave girl," he answered, "it is very far. It would be better for you not to try to go."

Blue Bird did not cease to beg the chief for the directions she desired, and finally he consented to tell her.

"Follow up the Elk River all the way and keep on the south side," he said. "When you cross the Bighorn River, you will come to a place where there is a large rock on a flat. This is called The Lion's Bed.[1] You will then be about two nights away from Swift Eagle's camp. Look up the river, and you will see the valley narrowing and the cliffs coming in toward the river on both sides. Follow the river up, keeping on the same side, and you will find his camp in a ravine."

Blue Bird prepared to go. She took her awl, sinew, buckskin, and *pasflesche* (rawhide), in order to mend her mocassins; she took a supply of pemmican, which was pounded meat mixed with chokecherries and buffalo's marrow, to last many days, and a large butcher-knife with which to defend herself. She went to a girl friend and told her of her plan to go up the Elk River to find the only man she had ever cared for. She asked Sings Toward The Mountain to carry her on her horse until midnight and then get back home before daylight so the people of the camp would not know she had helped her to escape. On the morrow Sings Toward The Mountain did as Blue Bird requested.

When it was discovered that Blue Bird was missing with her best buckskin dress, the alarm was

[1] Pompey's Pillow, twenty miles from Billings.

CROW MEDICINE SHIELDS

given and the whole camp turned out in search of her. After an all-day's search no trace of Blue Bird could be found.

This was the month of the yellow leaves (September). Blue Bird traveled up Elk River by night for seven nights; then she traveled by day, keeping close to the timber which made the distance much greater. On the eighth day out, while she was making some wild-mint tea, she heard men's voices. She put her fire out and hurried within the shelter of the trees. Peering from her hiding-place she saw a war-party looking for a good place to camp for the night. When the warriors had passed out of sight she continued up the river and traveled as far as she could. As she had traveled all day she was tired and worn out. She saw a cliff and climbed it to spy around. She found a cave up there which was nice and cozy. Near-by was a spring and plenty of wood. So she made tea of wild mint, ate her breakfast, and crawled into the cave and slept. When she awoke it was raining and snowing, so she decided to stay there all night. When she looked down at the river she saw two fires. She could hear the war-party singing. This made her stick to the cave all the closer.

In the morning the war-party broke camp and started back down the river. Perhaps a bad dream had caused them to change their course. The snow was wet so Blue Bird decided to stay in her rock wigwam another day to mend her moccasins and rest. She began debating with herself whether to go on or turn back. On her back-trail was the war-

party that might find her if she went that way. If she reached her home in safety she would be compelled to marry the chief who had bought her. Up the river was Swift Eagle. She longed to find him and nurse him, and so after another day in the cave she resumed the journey up the river.

Blue Bird traveled all day and camped at sundown near a beaver-dam. She heard the plopping of the beavers' tails against the water just before diving. Coyotes yapped, and afar off a wolf howled. Owls hooted. She took out her bear's claw, and prayed that the Great Spirit would keep her safe and guide her to Swift Eagle's camp. She knew that some day he would be a great man among his people.

She traveled four days and then began to cut her daily allowance of food to one small meal a day. One day she sat near a hollow log tired and hungry. She had two very scant meals left and how many days of travel lay between her and Swift Eagle she did not know. As she sat there weeping and praying she saw a rabbit run into the hollow log. She went and cut a long willow stick and split the end of it three times. She put the split end into the log and poked it around until she felt something soft. Then she twisted her stick until the split end caught into the fur and skin of the rabbit. She pulled it out and killed it. She ran her stick in again and pulled out another rabbit. She tried again but got nothing. Then she had a real meal. Thoughts came to her then of her father setting snares for rabbits. She decided to set four of them. First she bent a willow branch and tied it down over a runway with

some grass. To the willow she fastened a loop of sinew string which hung over the runway so that a rabbit would be likely to jump into it. To get loose it would have to break the grass, the willow spring would fly up and the rabbit would get hung. Often she had gone out with her father to help bring in the night's catch, little dreaming that some day she would be obliged to get her meals in that way or not eat at all. She set four snares along the runway that night before she crawled into a beaver's lodge that had been deserted, making her a warm place to sleep. In the morning she found three rabbits in her traps. She cooked all of them, ate all she wanted, and carried the rest as she started up the river looking for the landmarks Black Bear had told her she would find.

Now it began to snow so hard that she could not see far ahead of her. The wind blew up cold. She felt heavy-hearted, and took out her bear's claw, and prayed to it to give her strength and a brave heart. She looked up the side of a hill and saw what appeared to be a passage into a cave. She went up there and found the hole just large enough to admit her slender form. The cave was quite large, with a hole in the top for the smoke to go out. She built a fire and there she spent the night and the next day and night, protected from the cold. When she walked around the bend of the river she saw the large rock Black Bear had described, called Lion's Head by the Indians. Now she knew that she was not far from the place where Swift Eagle had been left by the men of her tribe.

Blue Bird ate some rabbit and drank some wild-mint tea for her breakfast. Then she took out her bear's claw, and held it over burning sweet grass while she worshiped, praying to the Great Spirit to guide her and keep her out of the hands of her enemies. Then she resumed her walk up the river, and to her great joy saw where the valley narrowed to a passage between two great cliffs. She remembered what Black Bear had said about this and walked all the faster. She knew that she was in the country where she would find Swift Eagle's camp. As she hurried along she chewed the leaves of the winter sage as Indian long-distance runners will do when very weary. She traveled until dark. In the morning she bathed in the river that was partly frozen over, painted her face, combed her hair with the tail of a porcupine and made a vow that she, Blue Bird, would die beside Swift Eagle's body should she find him dead. Singing her death-song she started up a steep hill toward a tree which leaned toward the place where the sun goes down. Black Bear had told her about this tree.

As she neared the top of the cliff she sang: "O Great Spirit, do not disappoint me in finding Swift Eagle dead or alive. If he is not on this earth let me meet him among those who have passed to the great Beyond."

Swift Eagle's brother, Spotted Horse, heard the voice and was afraid. He ran to his brother's tepee and told him about the song. Both sat quiet and again Blue Bird sang.

"It may be some one from the Land of Happy People," said Swift Eagle. "Go out and tell her that she will be welcomed by Swift Eagle."

Spotted Horse did as he was told.

Blue Bird came down off the hill and saw the tepee and fire. When she saw the fire she knew that Swift Eagle was living, as it is believed by Indians that no fires are used by the departed ones.

As she neared the camp she called out, "Swift Eagle, are you alive?"

"Come in, Blue Bird," answered Swift Eagle. "Tell me the news of our dear people."

So Blue Bird went in. After eating a good meal of venison which Swift Eagle's brother had cooked, she told where the Crows were camped and all that had happened to her since he saw her last. When she told him that she had been bought by Pretty Eagle, Swift Eagle bowed his head in long thought.

"My dear Blue Bird," he said. "I want you for my very own after coming all this distance risking your life for me. I do not believe there is a braver woman on earth. But you were bought by a chief, and I must take you back to the one who rightfully owns you. If it is the will of the Great Spirit that you should be free again I shall be glad to be your husband. I shall not marry another. I have spoken the truth. Make this your home until we return to our people."

So Blue Bird tanned the hides that Spotted Horse brought in, both elk and deer, and made a good supply of moccasins, shirts, and leggings. Spotted Horse also scouted around like a wolf every morn-

ing to watch for hunting- or war-parties. One day he saw horses come out of the timber to graze on the flat. He counted nine of them. So he went back to camp to report, and Swift Eagle told him to go back and watch. He discovered five Nez Perces men each having five horses. He watched closely and made out that the party was out scouting for game. At sundown he watched closely and did not return to camp until he saw where the horses were put for the night. Then he returned to Swift Eagle and Blue Bird and told them all that he had found out. So they made ready to move at once. Swift Eagle had been walking a little but was still weak.

This was in the month of geese (March). Blue Bird hurried and made three saddle pads out of deer and elk hair and some ropes out of hides. Spotted Horse went down where the Nez Perces horses were picketed and drove every one of them to camp. Swift Eagle, Spotted Horse, and Blue Bird each chose a mount, packed two other horses, and started down Elk River toward home, driving the rest of the horses ahead of them and leaving the Nez Perces entirely afoot. They traveled all night and all the next day. Swift Eagle told Spotted Horse to put across a branch of the river to an island, where they got a warm meal and allowed the horses to graze and then lie down for the rest of the day. All were tired. All night long it had been snowing, so the Nez Perces could not tell which way their horses went.

The journey down the river continued day after day. Among the horses they took from the Nez

Perces was a strawberry roan, very fleet and strong. Swift Eagle decided to save him, keep him in good flesh, and give him to Chief Pretty Eagle as a fitting memorial of the safe return of Blue Bird.

Near the mouth of Tongue River the travelers found the main camp of the Crows. So they painted themselves and charged into camp just at the break of day, singing their victory song, and reined up in front of the chief's tepee which is always in the center of the camp.

Swift Eagle called out: "Pretty Eagle, come out and get your horse and your wife. I am Swift Eagle."

Pretty Eagle came out and began to sing his joy song. He shook hands with Swift Eagle and said: "My boy, Blue Bird belongs to you. I am too much of a warrior to separate a woman from a man for whom she will risk her own life, as Blue Bird did. You keep her and let me be your friend and father. You have won your chieftainship, so from this day on you shall be Chief Swift Eagle, next in rank to me. You have won many *coups*."

Swift Eagle married Blue Bird and was happy, but when they went to eat he noticed that his people had little to eat so he called upon the head chief, Pretty Eagle, and asked him why it was that food was scarce. Pretty Eagle said that those who were good hunters were faring fine, but the poor shots and the old men were often in need.

"Well," said Swift Eagle, "call your council, and let us see if we cannot pass laws so that we can all fare and share alike. I believe the Great Spirit

did not intend that one should have any more than another."

So a council was called by Pretty Eagle, and after smoking the medicine-pipe and having a word with the Great Spirit, he got up and spoke, and told them that Chief Swift Eagle had something in his heart which he wished to tell his people, and also make some changes in the laws if all were willing. All said, "Ah-ho!"

Swift Eagle got up and said: "Dear tribesmen: while lying very sick all winter up the Elk River, I thought a great deal and talked with the Great Spirit, asking him to give me knowledge, if I was spared, to help my people. Now there are a lot of our people who are old, like Sitting Elk. He cannot hunt as well as he could a few years ago, especially when game is scarce and are much hunted and are wild. They go short and even go in want. I believe right now some of you have a plenty and some are hungry. We should take all our food, and pile it up in the center of our camp, and divide it evenly among ourselves. Hereafter when the hunters go out and come in with the day's kill, they should make one pile of meat near the tepee of Pretty Eagle, and call all our people to the center of the camp, and divide the meat equally among all.

"Again, if some should have the misfortune to burn out, which often happens, we should each give toward replacing this man's loss in whatever we may have in plenty, kettles, lodge-poles, blankets, and packing-bags."

After a long talk the new Indian laws were

adopted and they were practised up until late years by our Crow people.

The same laws applied to losses in horses. If an Indian's horses were stolen by the enemy, and he left afoot, the tribe as a whole soon gave him horses for all of his needs, pack-horses to carry the tepee houses and to drag the lodge-poles, and a horse for each member of his family. So it took several head to the family, but nevertheless the number was supplied to the one who lost his horses.

In this way one Crow was not any better off than the other. The chief oftentimes had less worldly riches than the poorest of his tribe.

So Chief Swift Eagle was considered one of the greatest chiefs of his tribe. He was kind to all of the people, yet was fearless. In battle he led the warriors. So he was dearly loved by his people and feared by his enemies. Swift Eagle talked Pretty Eagle into moving up near the mountains, telling him what Red Fox had said about the advantages to be found there winter and summer. So they moved up the Elk River and followed Arrow Rock Creek to its source where they camped and chopped lodge-poles. They gathered a good supply of service-berries, wild turnips, carrots, choke-cherries, and other supplies for the winter. Then they moved down the river to the spot where the town of Billings now stands.

Smallpox broke out in the camp, and the Crows died by the hundreds. It seemed that they would all die. Blue Bird died and Swift Eagle wrapped her body in a buffalo hide and laid it away in a tree.

He did not cry but dressed himself in his best buckskin shirt and leggings. This was a strange thing for him to do, something a Crow will not do when a member of his family dies. When all the mourners came back into camp and saw him they were surprised.

Swift Eagle mounted his favorite white horse. All painted up, he told his people that he was going to offer himself as a sacrifice.

"I must do this so that the Great Spirit will spare you," said Swift Eagle. "If I could see the cause of the great plague I would go out and fight it, either to get killed or to kill it. But I cannot see this enemy. I will give my life so that my people may be spared. Over there, just across the river, three years ago, I was left with a broken leg. Blue Bird came all the way up the big river to find me and take care of me. Now she leaves me here all alone and cannot come back to me. I know she would come if she could. She cannot come to me but I can go to her and at the same time help you, my people."

Swift Eagle said good-bye to the camp and rode to the top of the cliff above where Billings now stands and sang his death-song for the last time. A man walked up to him, having followed him all the way from camp. This was Spotted Horse, his brother. He mounted the horse behind Swift Eagle. Together the two rode about one hundred steps away from the rim and then charged over the cliff at full speed. Both were killed.

Buffalo That Shakes, the mother of the two braves

who rode over the cliff, mourned and wailed over the loss of her two sons. Every day she could be heard calling her sons by name as she stood on some high point above the camp.

Only three hundred and fifty were left of the two thousand Mountain Crows that had lived on Elk River. They moved to the Pryor Mountains. Swift Eagle's mother climbed to the top of one of the Castle Rocks and fasted four days and nights, calling upon the Great Spirit to help her people that they might increase again. She came down and told her people that one of the messengers of the Great Spirit came to her and told her to make thirty-six piles of rocks, beginning at Arrow Head Rock and going north toward the old camping-grounds on Elk River where so many of her people died. She said that she had followed the directions given her in the dream so that her people would multiply on the earth again. The Great Spirit would continue to bless them if they obeyed the vision. When going through Pryor Gap all Crow Indians must travel single file and add rocks to the piles. As long as they did this they would increase; if they quit doing this they would diminish. Thus spoke Buffalo That Shakes.

Those rock piles can be seen even to this day. Swift Eagle's mother lived to be three generations old.

So ends the story of Swift Eagle that Red Neck told his son Alvin when snowbound in the Big-horn Valley.

V

CROW AGENCY

"On the hunting-trails of his people he knew the way."

Red Neck was thirteen years of age when one of his Spanish uncles took him to the Pacific Slope to ride as a jockey in the horse-races which the frontier gamblers sponsored to fleece the tenderfoot. The $100 his mother sent for his schooling was not spent that way. The boy received a severe schooling on the race-tracks of many frontier towns but none behind an Oregon school desk. When he came back to the land of the Crows his memories of Western Oregon in the early '80's were not pleasant.

At this time the cattle outfits were coming in from Texas to lease grazing-land in Montana when they could not get it free, and Red Neck soon secured a job with one of them.

The day the Indian boy rode Nerve, the outlaw of the JD cavvy, his place on the cattle-range was assured. Foreman Sim Roberts, thrown by Nerve, conceived a liking for the boy, dubbed him Slivers, added Nerve to his string, and put him in charge of the horse herd.

Influences that changed the life-trend of the tall, likable horse-wrangler of the JD outfit, had their beginning when Sim Simonsen, the round-up cook,

began taking an interest in him. Many of Simonsen's conversational leads had to do with education and places where Indian boys could obtain the same. Evidently he had detected a strain in the Indian's make-up that suggested to him that a few years spent in school by the boy would not be time wasted. One day he brought the matter to a focus.

"Johnny, why don't you leave the range for a while and attend some school?" he asked.

"I don't know where to go," said John.

"If I write to the agency officials for you, will you go?"

"I think so."

After the spring round-up John left the JD outfit and went to work for Tom Kent who owned a large herd of horses and several bands of sheep. To the Kent ranch came United States Marshal Quivey.

"I'm looking for Johnny Frost," said the officer.

When the big Indian boy was called in by his boss, Quivey told him that if he wanted to enter the government school at Crow Agency he could get ready and go with him at once.

"No, I need Johnny to help me finish rounding up my horses," said Kent. "Let him stay with me the rest of the summer, and in September I will be able to take him to Crow Agency myself."

The summer held for John an experience with a broncho that he never forgot. His acquaintance with Buck, a bad horse Kent owned, began in a pasture one evening when he mounted him. The horse was a handsome cream, with blazed face, four white stockings, and a symmetry and grace to turn

any horse-lover's head, but he was as wild and dangerous as a bull elk. In some way he had become spoiled. Tom Kent had told John not to ride him.

To dislodge the lanky Indian boy from the saddle Buck employed his entire repertory of bad actions, his fury mounting with his repeated failures to accomplish his purpose. Finally he sank to his knees and tried to reach the boy's legs with his bared teeth, squealing with rage—a wild thing, eyes shooting hatred, nostrils dilated, bent on killing. The Indian youth, man in strength and determination, fought back with heel and quirt until he won the battle. The horse got to his feet and stood with head drooping and foam-flecked sides heaving. John dismounted.

"Don't get on that man-killer again," warned Tom Kent who had been watching the contest. "Tomorrow I'll shoot him."

At sun-up next day, John, packing a gun, took Buck to a flat away from the ranch. He meant to give him another trial. He had made up his mind to shoot the horse if he started to fight.

Buck's surrender the evening before stood. He made no ugly move and the boy rode him, charmed with his beautiful gait and endurance. Tom Kent gave the horse to him—his already by right of conquest.

When Kent and his Indian wife made the trip by wagon from the mouth of Bridger Creek to Crow Agency to place John in the government school located there, the boy, now seventeen, traveled on Buck. The party was four days on the road. Strong

Face was at Crow Agency to meet her "Little Son," intending to go back to the Yellowstone in Tom Kent's wagon.

The big boy from the cattle-range was assigned a bunk in a dormitory and was placed in one of the lower classes in school. From his tremendous height he looked down upon the heads of the small children who were his companions in the bewildering maze of "See, this is a cat. My mamma sees the cat. Mamma, see the cat." Up to that tragic moment this seventeen-year-old child of the wilderness, once the guide for a sheriff's posse on the trail of one of the last of the Jackson Hole gangs, had been in school but ninety days, and he had forgotten nearly all the schoolma'am at the Absaroka Agency had taught him. He felt beaten and humilated. His sense of pride was further outraged when he was bidden to get into a box with another boy and thresh beans by treading upon them with his feet. Near sun-down he went to Tom Kent's camp on the river flat. The sight of Buck gave him a torturing thrill, arousing vivid and alluring memories of the unhampered life in the Indian country and on the wide stock-ranges; calling back experiences wherein he had won recognition for his skill with gun and trap on the game-trails or with horse and lariat on the round-up. He must have one last ride on Buck.

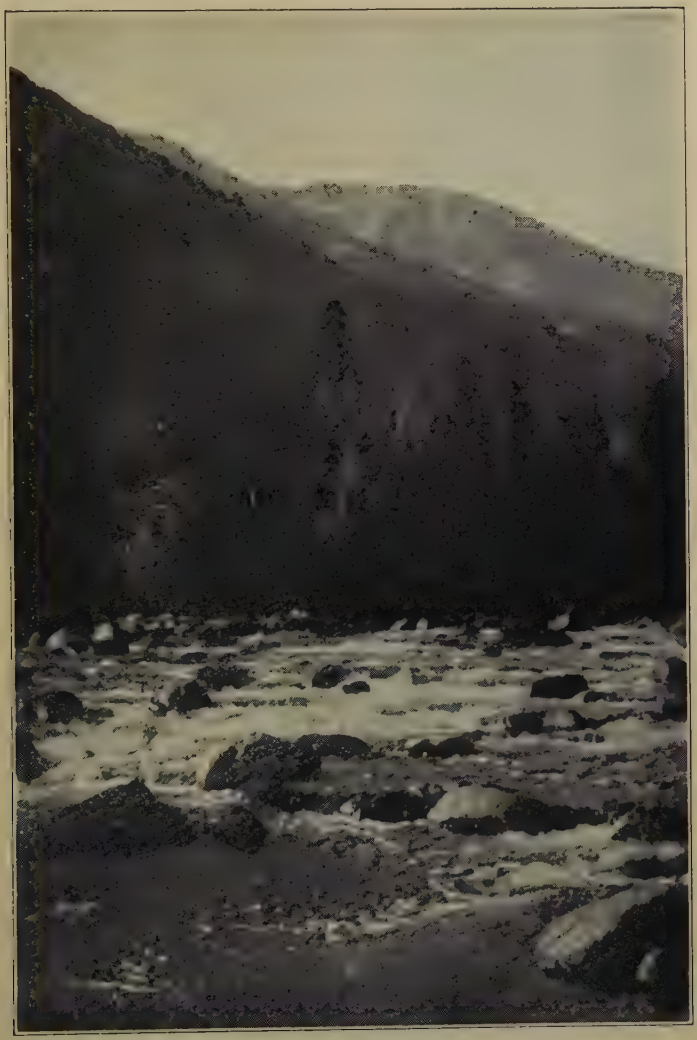
Once mounted on his pal of the open, an impulse seized him to place many miles between himself and his ABC's. On the divide between the Little Bighorn and the Bighorn Rivers he drew Buck to a stand. Ahead of him towered the Pryor Moun-

tains, marking his intended destination. At their base lived Chief Plenty Coups who often had asked him to come and help him take care of his horses and cattle and make his home with him. Until he drew rein and dismounted he had been obedient to the call that drew him toward the country of Blackfoot, Plenty Coups and the Mountain Crows. He was Indian; in Crow lodges he was at home; on the hunting-trails of his people he knew the way; why try to penetrate the mysteries of the white man's world?

John Frost could see Crow Agency lying back of him in the valley of the Little Bighorn. With brooding eyes he looked at the distant western horizon behind which the sun had gone to rest. He knew that beyond the Pryors lay the Stillwater and the Beartooth Range where the smoke columns from many camp-fires arose to mingle above the pines. His heart yearned for the hunting-grounds of his people. He had thought he would allow Buck to take him there. Standing there he wept; the impulse to leave Crow Agency had passed; he knew that he was saying good-bye to Buck.

In the morning Tom Kent, his wife and Strong Face journeyed out of the Little Bighorn Valley toward the Stillwater and the Sweetgrass country, leaving John at Crow Agency, a lonesome cog in the daily grind of that institution.

T. W. Campbell, a messenger from Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., arrived the following February to recruit pupils for the famous institution founded by Captain Richard Henry Pratt.



HUNTING-GROUNDS OF THE CROWS
ON THE STILLWATER

Seventeen boys and five girls consented to enter the Eastern school, and early one morning the young Crows began the long trip to Pennsylvania. They left Crow Agency in two wagons. The nearest railway-station was Custer, on the Northern Pacific. John Frost was a member of the company.

Tillie That Kills With Her Brother " wanted an education " and joined the Carlisle group in spite of the disapproval of her mother, Two Woman. The latter met the wagons five miles out of Crow Agency near a bend in the Little Bighorn where she was camped. She rode furiously at the leaders of the four-horse team and neatly " jack-knifed " the outfit, that is, turned the leaders back against the wheelers. The angry woman then demanded possession of Tillie That Kills With Her Brother who had quickly hidden herself under a seat when she saw her mother approaching.

Tillie had a mind of her own that day. " I want an education," she declared. " You put me in the school at Crow Agency when I did not want to go. But now I want to go to this other school."

Campbell gave Two Woman three dollars, thinking a little gift might pacify her. The grief-stricken mother threw the money away and sat down beside the road and wailed while the caravan passed on. A few miles further on an Indian rider overtook the wagons. The man was Tillie's father.

" Did they force you to go? " he asked the girl.

" No, I want to go," said Tillie.

Without further comment the Crow turned and rode back.

VI

CARLISLE

"Spotted Tail, had you been properly trained as a young man, you might be filling a high position in the land."

Several Apache boys at Carlisle, drunk on hard cider, were put in the guard-house to sober off. In view of this infraction of a rule of the school, Captain Pratt delivered a lecture before the entire student body.

"Are there any good Indians?" he asked. The question may have been merely rhetorical.

John Frost nodded his head. The culprit claimed afterward that he was communicating with the boy sitting next to him.

"Johnny, stand up!" ordered the head of the school. "You know of some good Indians?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where are they?"

John indicated their location by pointing toward the cemetery which he could see through a window.

"They are all out there, sir," he assured the officer.

"Take him to the guard-house!"

This was mild military discipline. After three hours in duress the Crow youth was summoned to Captain Pratt's office.

"Johnny, why did you say that?" asked the good friend of Indian boys.

"It's what I've been taught to believe."

"Do you believe it?"

"I wouldn't want to die to find out."

The writer understands that the interview ended at this point.

Captain Pratt had sublime faith in the goodness of live Indians. He believed that Indian nature, so-called, is the same human nature, so-called, that is possessed by the Smiths, Van Cleves, Hagstroms, and Steiners of other racial groups. Strange as it may seem this faith came to flower while the army officer was in charge of some Indian prisoners at Fort Marion, Florida.

Captain Pratt's account of his discovery that an Indian safely can be treated as a human being contains a straight-armed punch:

During the Indian wars of 1874-1875 it was my duty under the orders of General Sheridan to put irons on nearly one hundred Indian prisoners indicated as frontier marauders of the Kiowa and Comanche tribes at Fort Sill and to care for them in prison, and also to take care of nearly seven hundred others—men, women, and children of their families and followers held in prison-camps.

It was my duty to take forty of the most turbulent of these Kiowas and Comanches and thirty-four more, Cheyennes and Arapahoes of the same sort, while thus in irons to Florida, and to remain in charge and train them to such civilized living as was possible during their three years' imprisonment. They were not tried. The Constitution of the United States which provides that "no man shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law," was not observed in their case. I early removed their irons and

did what I could to ameliorate their condition. During two and one-half years of this prison life I dispensed with the military guard by organizing the younger prisoners into a company with sergeants and corporals as subcommanders, drilled them to include the school of the company, gave them guns, and had them guard the old fort and themselves. There was no failure or breach of discipline during that whole period and I had their utmost confidence and energetic obedience throughout.

Captain Pratt's faith in live Indians was subjected to further test in September, 1879, when at the beginning of his activities as the head of the Carlisle School, he met in council at the Rosebud and Pine Ridge agencies the surviving chiefs of the Cheyennes and Sioux, three years after Custer was washed out on the Little Bighorn. He had been authorized by the Indian Bureau to ask these chiefs to send their children to Carlisle to sit in classes alongside other Indian boys and girls from the Dakotas, Indian Territory, and elsewhere.

Back on reservations after the punitive expeditions of Miles, Crook, Terry, Howard, and Gibbon, the warrior chiefs of the Northwest, with a few exceptions—Sitting Bull was in Canada—had accepted defeat philosophically but refused to canonize their victors.

"The white people are all thieves and liars," said Spotted Tail in his reply to Captain Pratt, "and we refuse to send our children [to Carlisle], because we do not want them to learn such things. The government deceived us in the Black Hills Treaty. The government knew that gold was there, and it took the land from us without giving us its value,

and so the white people get rich and the Indians are cheated and become poor. The government let us keep this plains country, and it agreed that the lines [surveys] should be away out, and we should have a large district. Your men are out there now running the lines and they run the lines a long ways inside of where we agreed they should be. Some of our people who lived outside of these lines have been compelled to move inside. The government has always cheated us, and we do not want our children to learn to do that way."

Spotted Tail's charges against the United States Government were applauded by the assembled chiefs. Captain Pratt recorded this as the most critical moment in the enterprise upon which he had ventured in behalf of neglected Indian youth.[1] It became his task to convince Spotted Tail, Two Strike, White Thunder, and Milk at the Rosebud Agency and Red Cloud, American Horse, and Young Man Afraid of His Horses at Pine Ridge Agency that their hatreds must be buried in view of the opportunities that the future held for the boys and girls in the remnants of Indian tribes. He described the way whereby he hoped to give Indian youth the courage and the ability to compete in civilized industries.

Space for only a part of Captain Pratt's vigorous plea in favor of an education for Indian boys and girls whose parents had so recently been at war against the United States Government can be given here:

[1] Brig. Gen. R. H. Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School;* published by the Hamilton Library Association, Carlisle, Pa.

Spotted Tail, you are a very distinguished man, your name has gone all over the United States. It has even gone across the ocean to other countries. You are the head of these people because you have a strong mind; but Spotted Tail, you cannot read and write. You sign papers, and you do not know what you sign. You know very little about the large interests of your tribal property and what is best for the people over whom you are placed, simply because you have no education.

I have no doubt that had you been properly trained as a young man and had the same opportunities our people have, you might be filling some high position in the land, but lacking in education and experience in our affairs you are not able to protect the interests of your own people. You have seen how the white people keep coming more and more. When a boy you very seldom saw a white man; now they are covering the country all around you. There is no chance for your people to keep themselves away from the whites. You are compelled to meet them. Your children will have to live with them. They will be all about you and among you in spite of anything you can do, or that can be done for you by those interested in keeping you apart from our people. Your own welfare while you live and the welfare of your children after you, and all your interests in every way, demand that your children shall have the same education that the white man has, that they should speak his language, and know just how the white man lives, be able to meet him face to face, and take care of themselves and their property without the help of either an interpreter or an Indian agent. Your children can acquire these qualities by no method that separates them from close contact with our people and these actual experiences. I propose not only to take your children to the school at Carlisle, but I shall send them out to work and live among the white people, and into the white man's home and school so that as boys and girls they will be coming into the same classes with white boys and girls and will so learn to know each other, and this will take away their prejudice against the whites and take away the preju-

dice of the whites against your people, and it is the only way to remove such prejudice.

"We are going to give you all the children you want," said Spotted Tail the day following the memorable council. "I am going to send five, Milk will send his boy and girl, Two Strike his two boys, White Thunder will send his boy and girl, and the others are going to send the rest."

The Rosebud and Pine Ridge agencies sent eighty-four boys and girls to Carlisle, considerably more than half of the number required for the opening of the school, November 1, 1879. Red Cloud had no children but he sent a grandson; American Horse sent three children.

Two years after the opening of Carlisle, Lucius Aitsan, a Kiowa, untamed and illiterate when he entered the school, sent a letter to Mokeen, his father, which reflected the Christian influence of Captain Pratt and the teachers he gathered about him. The letter, printed in *The School News* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa., June 6, 1881), is of historical interest in view of the fact that Lucius Aitsan became the first ordained Kiowa minister of the gospel in Oklahoma. He made an enthusiastic avowal of his love for his Lord and Saviour as soon as Miss Isabel Crawford began her pioneering work among the Kiowas. How he became the missionary's indispensable interpreter and assistant is told in Miss Crawford's incomparable book *Kiowa*. His responsiveness to every call in behalf of the growing mission was a constant source of inspiration to Miss Crawford. The letter referred to above follows:

MY DEAR LOVING FATHER:

Now let me try to write to you some more today. I am very sorry I can never write to you soon, because I have been sick but not sick inside my heart just very sore my neck was swollen that time but now I get very much better indeed again. I am stay in the hospital about two weeks yet I can do nothing because very hurt my neck I could not sleep about ten nights and when the doctor cut it open I get pretty well again. Now I want to tell you what I came here for at this Carlisle school. I came here to learn the white people's doing I have learned English language it is so nicely I do best in every ways I want to walk in the good ways that time I will found the white people ways it is very well. I will do it the right ways and when Captain Pratt to tell me to do something I will. I will remember all the time I am to be a smart boy I want to be industrious not idle and this time I feel all right contented and I want to stay here at Carlisle school because it is a pretty place here. I want to learn more and more. Last year I learned a great many of the hard words. And we are to be kind to each others. I am Christian boy I will try to pray God every day when I have doing hard lessons I pray God to help me I love God. All the Kiowa do that way and this time stop school pretty soon I guess. I will try speak English always to know the English the white people English very well and I am fond of talk English. Now dear Father I say to you something you must be a useful man be kind to all your peoples and I want you to stay there by the mountain (Saddle Mt., Oklahoma). I am so glad I hear from you some time ago that you have got a big farm cows and horses. I am happy always that you told me that I got some cows and horses. You must try hard of the farm and when I go back home I will to help you.

In June, 1913, thirty-two years after writing the above letter, Lucius Aitsan was ordained to the gospel ministry. The Christian church owes a debt of gratitude to Carlisle.

CHIEFS OLD CROW AND MEDICINE CROW
IN SHAM BATTLE

CHIEF TWO LEGGINGS

With Whom John Frost Has Visited Washington
as Crow Ambassador

Captain Pratt spoke frankly to his Indian pupils. John Frost many years later vividly recalled some of the assembly talks of the great pioneer in Indian education.

"Boys, I fought your fathers and grandfathers. They were good fighters. You Indians are fighters. I want you to turn those same fighting qualities in ways that will assist you to help your people."

One December day it became John's rare privilege to sound the depths of Captain Pratt's sympathies for one fighting Indian.

The year was 1890. An Absaroka-Sioux battle, a hold-over from the days of Sitting Bull's reign in the valleys of the Yellowstone, Tongue, and Bighorn rivers, suddenly staged in the boys' reading-room at Carlisle, began with a war-whoop by the Crow and might have ended with the death of the Sioux. John Frost uttered the yell when his eyes drank in a story in a newspaper he was reading.

Why all the commotion?

John did not hesitate to answer the inquiry by saying that he had just read of the shooting by Indian police of Sitting Bull, leader of the Ghost Dances in South Dakota, and volunteered the opinion that the Bull got what he deserved. There are on record diverse opinions relating to the justice of the punishment dealt the participants in the reputed uprising under Sitting Bull which culminated in the battle at Wounded Knee. Whether John would have voiced his feelings as openly and exultantly as he did had he known that Big Horse, a nephew of Sitting Bull, was in the room, is also a

matter for speculation. The offended relative of the noted medicine-man sprang at John and there was a fight. Both were good. The Sioux was the older and heavier man, but the Crow was faster on his feet and more skilful with his fists. The latter repeatedly downed the Sioux with short-armed jabs to the chin. Big Horse, whether down or upright, kept boring in. Finally he could not get up. Half blinded he crawled toward John on hands and knees. Then Red Neck remembered the terrible vow he had made to the sun at the request of his mother. He had not mentioned the circumstances connected with his father's passing when asked to explain his cheers. Even so he might not have prevented the slam-bang affair around and around the table in which he had become involved.

Punched into helplessness the Sioux continued to crawl toward John, his sheer courage and fighting instinct carrying him toward his destruction.

John seized a chair and raised it with the intent of braining his opponent. His old yearning to kill a Sioux, pay his vow, still the wails of his mother, gave to memory arms and hands for dreadful action, but Captain Pratt's voice in the doorway called the youth back to the present and to sanity. Mr. Campbell grabbed the chair.

"Come to my office, John," ordered the senior officer.

A fight indoors was a serious offense at Carlisle. John believed that he was to be dismissed. He was asked to state why the trouble began. He told how it started in 1871 when the Sioux under Sitting Bull

raided his homeland; he mentioned his vow to avenge the murder of his father.

"Your father was a good man, John," said Captain Pratt. "I knew him when he served as a surgeon in the Union Army. We'll not discipline you for this."

It was John Frost's good fortune to have as one of his teachers Miss Clara C. McAdams who had unbounded enthusiasm for her work. Outside of his regular class and study periods this Christian woman found time to give him Bible lessons. She assisted him in the cultivation of an appreciation of the simple courtesies which are considered important in well-directed homes and public places. It fell out that she was advanced with his class, and he was kept under her influence two years.

It will be recalled that Captain Pratt assured Chief Spotted Tail of his intention during certain periods to place the boys and girls of Carlisle in families of the whites, the boys to work in the field and in the shop and the girls in the house. He had tested the value of the outing system with the Indian prisoners in Florida and later when he sent a number of these same young men to a New England community.

John Frost was farmed out for a time to a family in a Quaker neighborhood in Pennsylvania not far from the point on the Delaware where Washington crossed with his troops. He has vivid memories of the friendliness of the people there. James Keath and his wife and their two sons, James and John, succeeded in making him feel at ease in their home.

He attended the services in the Quaker meeting-house, accepted invitations to house-warmings, corn-husking bees, and other doings of a social nature. One Quaker family, near neighbors of the Keaths, was especially attentive to him. The male head of this household appeared to take peculiar delight in drawing the Crow out in conversation, assuring John that he considered it an honor to have as guest in his home a representative of a people that had exhibited a saving hospitality when the first white settlers in Pennsylvania faced starvation.

This Indian boy who had received his early training in the camps of a primitive people and was given the chance to learn in a natural way the customs of a civilized life, made certain contributions to the community life of the Quakers which they were not slow to recognize and appreciate.

James Keath owned a Western horse named Jersey that no one on the farm had succeeded in riding. John gentled the animal and later surprised Keath with the speed of which the horse was capable. Mrs. Keath was taken ill suddenly one night, and John was sent to town for the doctor. The boy rode Jersey, and when the doctor arrived at the farm before he was expected Keath asked him how he happened to come. An Indian boy on a swift pony was the explanation.

"Nothing the matter with Jersey," said John when he returned. "What he needs to keep him on his feet is for some one to ride him about thirty miles a day."

What was advertised as a Wild West show erected

its tent for a one-day stand in the Quakers' trading center. The ringmaster challenged his rural customers to ride a bucking horse used to exploit the highly tooted horsemanship of one of his riders. "Ten dollars for anybody in the audience who can ride the outlaw." "Five dollars if you can rope the calf." When two Indian boys from Carlisle, a Crow named Frost and a Blackfoot named Hamilton, won the prizes, the Quakers enjoyed their treat and indulged in a hearty laugh at the expense of the showman who thought he was safe with his challenge in that section of rural Pennsylvania.

John derived great pleasure in exhibiting at the county fair a Holstein bull owned by Keath. He started from the farm at midnight and led the animal to the fair-grounds by means of a pole and ring. He curried and polished the beast with meticulous care and had the joy of leading him out upon the track wearing the blue ribbon.

Captain Pratt received a good report covering John Frost's outing in the Quaker neighborhood, and when he read it together with three or four other reports that compared favorably with it, John was elected captain of Company A at Carlisle by acclamation. The boys whose reports were read had been asked to stand out in full view of the pupils in company formation.

John played on Carlisle's first football-team. One of his teammates was Bemus Pierce, later to become nationally known for his brilliant record on the gridiron and ability as a coach. John left Carlisle before the school achieved a ranking in intercol-

legiate sports. His record at the institution brought him a recommendation for a government job on the Crow Reservation. He was given the position of disciplinarian in one of the dormitories in the government school at Crow Agency, a position he resigned after six months to enter service at Fort Custer as scout and interpreter.

VII

FORT CUSTER

"The thing my people needed in that day was the consciousness of the sacredness of womanhood."

At Fort Custer on the high mesa above the junction of the Bighorn and Little Bighorn Rivers, John Frost found congenial employment as scout and interpreter. To the Crow people he was still Red Neck, son of Strong Face, yet they noted with concern that, unlike the course pursued by other young men who had returned to the reservation from Carlisle, he did not engage in old tribal practises and ceremonies. Neither did he hold himself aloof from them. At this early date he gave evidence of a strong tribal loyalty that has distinguished him through life. The Crows looked upon John Frost as a champion of their rights as Indians. They knew that at the government school at Crow Agency he had engaged in battle with a white teacher who had treated a seven-year-old Indian boy in a manner to arouse his wrath. Shortly before this encounter he had fought his way out of a room where some white men had tried to compel him to drink some whiskey.

He was not long under orders at Fort Custer before his friendly heart got him into further trouble. Stepping off the train at Columbus, Montana,

whither he had been sent on an errand, he saw an old sheep-herder named Ward being abused by a bully. Ward was on his customary spree after months spent alone in remote camps; the bully was deriving some kind of pleasure from the sound of the old man's howls when his whiskers were pulled.

John mopped his perspiring face and brushed the dust from his clothes after his set-to with Ward's tormentor, and invited the competent old guardian of the range to come with him off the street.

Ward cursed the boy affably and went on his way, doubtless with a portion of his half-year's wages still burning his pockets.

That day John met his friend Hansurd, a ranchman from Greycliff, who took him to task for his street fight.

"Jack, you had a wonderful father. You don't want to disgrace his name."

"Suppose somebody had pulled your whiskers?" asked the scout. "Wouldn't you be sore about it?"

"That's a different story. It did not come to me that way."

Soon after John's appointment as scout at Fort Custer he engineered through a business transaction which further enhanced his reputation as a defender of his people. This had to do with a hay contract under which a white man sold forage to the army post at a price more than double that for which he bought the hay from the Indians.

Disturbed about the way the Indians were being outsmarted by the white man, John sought the advice of Lieutenant Finley of Troop E, Tenth Cavalry,

FORT CUSTER

for whom he had a great liking. The lieutenant was somewhat posted in the common law.

"Why can't our Indians sell this hay direct to the army post?" asked John. "Is there any law against their making a contract with the commissary department?"

Lieutenant Finley could think of nothing that should prevent the Indians from entering into a business agreement with any one and assured the scout that he would bring the matter to the attention of Colonel Perry, the commanding officer. At the request of the latter John sent for three chiefs—Pretty Eagle, Old Crow, and Spotted Horse—and told them how the Indians could sell their blue joint directly to the commissary officer at the post and get for themselves the profits formerly pocketed by the middleman. The commanding officer met the chiefs in council and assured them that the scout's plan had his approval. As the result of John's intervention, the Crows received from fifteen to twenty dollars per ton for their hay instead of five, and the name of Red Neck was spoken more frequently in the councils of the headmen of the tribe.

John's growing influence on the reservation had in it elements of danger. Many forces were active to drag him back into the old Indian ways. His spirit revolted against retrogression. He knew in what direction lay temptations too strong for a Crow to resist. He knew how fast an educated Indian could travel downward when he once more adopted the customs and engaged in the dances and ceremonies of his fellow tribesmen who knew no better

way. Outside of his own moral judgment of right and wrong there was for him on the reservation no spiritual anchorage, no affiliation with groups of Christians in churches or fraternal societies of the higher order. Acts considered *wrong* in the world which for him had centered at Carlisle were *right* according to the Indian social order. The very organization of the social life of the Crows made it well-nigh impossible for him to live on speaking terms with his friends and relatives without engaging in their ceremonies and dances.

The scout was honor guest in Plenty Coups' camp on the occasion of the Crow celebration, July 4, 1893. The several chiefs gathered with their bands and finest regalia to make their best showing. The Crow people erected their tepees along the bank of the Little Bighorn on Medicine Tail's camp-grounds not far from the old Custer battlefield. The Tenth Cavalry, in holiday mood, rode over from Fort Custer to pitch camp near-by. There were many Indian games, races, and dances to fill out the day's program.

At this time Chief Plenty Coups had begun to take stock of John Frost as a future leader of his people. He conceived a great liking for him. The young scout reciprocated. The latter's admiration and affection for this Indian have grown with the years.

In the chiefs' parade John rode next to Plenty Coups. His companion was the chief's youngest and most attractive wife. Every horse was ridden double by a man and a woman. It delighted Plenty

Coups to bestow a favor upon this handsome young giant by inviting him to ride with his favorite wife. While the arrangement in itself signified nothing more than a courtesy shown an honored guest, the prominence given the scout in the parade directed toward him the attention of many maidens. Plenty Coups did not fail to remind John of this.

"You may have your pick of the lot," said the chief. "They will flock about you tonight at the camp-fire."

The full meaning of the parade that wound in and out among the tepees came home to the scout. According to tribal custom he was making the announcement that he was looking for a wife. As a matter of fact he was not at that time matrimonially inclined. He was on no quest for a mate. As far as he was concerned his participation in the parade was an evidence of the great friendship that existed between himself and Plenty Coups. Plenty Coups' laughing remark put him on guard. He knew that he had passed a danger-line. He had given public notice that he intended to take up with the old Indian ways.

Would it be the new way or the old? During that critical hour he thought of his Christian friends who had done so much for him at Carlisle and of the happy homes of the Quakers in Pennsylvania. Like a mantle the sacred associations of the past were revived in memory to envelop his spirit for his protection. He loved the Crow people, but in the strong light of knowledge that came from afar he saw their weakness, their poverty, their need. Pos-

sibly he could not have expressed in words the insight that he possessed that night, but in later years he said that the thing his people in that day needed above all else was a consciousness of the sacredness of womanhood and that only Christ could give that to any people.

After the sheik parade John rode directly to the camp of the troopers. There he was questioned by the daughter of a major.

"I saw you riding with a pretty woman this afternoon," she said. "Was she your sweetheart?"

"She was Plenty Coups' wife."

"Was not that the mating-dance?"

"It might be called that."

"Will you go with us to the big dance tonight and tell us all about it?"

"I will tell you about it if I go."

A Crow camp-fire; Indian women in gay blankets, and braves in war-shirts, leggings, and head-dresses; army officers and troopers, spurs jingling; a few women from Fort Custer—all contributed to make the scene one to stir primitive human hearts. One after another the veterans of wars occupied the center of the circle and recounted the *coups* they had won in battle and on horse-stealing raids. John was in the crowd about the blazing camp-fire but not of it. His face and body were covered with a blanket. As he was in the disguise of a mourner no one accosted him. The next morning he told the major's daughter many details of the dances and ceremonies. With characteristic fidelity he had kept a promise. Had it not been for his desire to com-

ply with her request he would have remained away from the Indian camp that night.

The day's experience convinced John that as time went on it would become increasingly difficult for him to resist the influences that had drawn his schoolmates back to the blanket. The greater the Crows' regard for him became, the more difficult would become his life on the reservation. The common courtesies it was customary to extend to a Crow while guest in the tepee of a fellow tribesman he could not accept without doing violence to his moral sensibilities. Through the years something fine had come to him to keep him clean.

Piker or quitter? Fainthearted if he left the reservation to escape its destroying entanglements? Should he remain, refuse to live as a tribesman, struggling on in the face of a withering boycott because he refused to live as a tribesman? To be read out of the tribe was the ultimate in misfortune for a Crow; to be adopted into a tribe as the Crows had adopted Red Neck in his infancy was the highest honor that could come to an Indian. To be a member of no tribe was to have no standing among the Indians of all tribes.

Captain Pratt knew what Indian youth confronted when they returned to their tribes after spending from two to five years in Carlisle. His educational goal was to hold boys and girls in Carlisle long enough to enable them to make a go of it in life without returning to their reservations. As against subsidies for Indians on their reservations Captain Pratt (Brigadier-General at the time) said:

"If it is right to persuade, hire, and force them to hang together in tribal masses, why is it not more righteous for their and our far higher good, and the relief of both races, to persuade, hire, and force them to quit tribal life and migrate into activities of civilized life?"

John Frost decided to leave the Crow Reservation. Seeking the counsel of his good friend, Lieutenant William H. Osborne of L Troop, Tenth Cavalry, he asked him to secure his release.

"Leave Fort Custer?" There was a note of sincere regret in the lieutenant's voice. "You have a good position. What has led you to want to leave?"

The scout told him that if he did not leave at once all that Carlisle had done for him might be undone. He said he did not want to go back into the dark ways of the old tribal life. This youth, fighting for his future, said that he must break away from friends and relatives, and that at once. But he hoped to be able to come back some day to help his people—perhaps lead them to find new trails better than the old.

The lieutenant was won by the scout's appeal. He told Frost to wait at headquarters until he brought him word from the post commander. The colonel's answer was favorable. The officer gave the Indian permission to return for duty after a ninety-day furlough which was immediately effective.

John left Fort Custer one morning riding his favorite saddle-horse and leading a pack-horse and an extra mount.

Carlisle, Carlisle!

He camped on Joe Picket's ranch that night. The following day at sunset he made the Robinson ranch in Pryor Valley. The next day he was with Chief Plenty Coups at the base of the Castle Rocks. He told Plenty Coups that he had quit his job at Fort Custer and was leaving the reservation. The chief was considerably upset by the news.

"Don't go, my son," said the head man of the Crows. "We need you in the tribe."

"I will come back after I have learned more of the white man's ways," said Red Neck.

"Stay with me, and you will become chief after me," said Plenty Coups. "You may take the daughter of one of our head men [the chief named father and daughter] for wife, and some day you will own a herd of a thousand horses."

Plenty Coups insisted that the thing to do was for him to provide a feast for the subchief and his daughter, and thus an opportunity for his young friend to observe the girl carefully without embarrassment to either party. It was a fair proposition, and Red Neck consented to remain at the feast. The subchief was sent for, and in a day or two he rode to Plenty Coups' lodge with his daughter.

"Well, what do you think of her?" asked Plenty Coups when his guests had departed.

"She is a nice girl—too good for me," said John whose determination to continue on the out-trail had not been shaken.

He rode to Big Timber, Montana, where he met a cowboy known as Happy Jack and went with him to the upper Madison River country to ride for the

VF outfit. A big horse round-up was in progress and he harried the bronchos out of the mountains until snow.

John Frost, ex-scout, did not return to Fort Custer in ninety days. Years passed before he went back to the Crow reservation.

After the horse round-up "Little Son" made a home for his mother upon an allotment of land on Deer Creek near Big Timber. As ranchman, with youth, a powerful body and what Captain Pratt termed "the Courage of Civilization," as his chief assets, he invested his savings in a work team, wagon, and a few farming implements. In this frontier community made up of a few full-blood and part-blood Indians, and many more whites, good, bad, and indifferent, including floaters and adventurers of every description, the Crow with a Carlisle training had his part to play in bringing in a new order. At that time Big Timber was a wide-open town.

VIII

BIG TIMBER

" If you want to abuse the stranger any more you can lick me first."

Before the coming of John Frost to Big Timber, Montana, the gamblers, keepers of houses of ill-fame, and idlers of all kinds in that community came to one's party whether invited or not.

The newcomer saw no reason why some of the social etiquette to which he had been exposed at Carlisle should not be in vogue on the frontier; the night he gave his first dance he asked the self-invited toughs and their " lady friends " to leave his premises. Two of the rounders objected and challenged Frost to meet them in Big Timber next morning. The Indian assured them that he would be there with bells on, and kept the appointment. Some of the Indian's friends were present to see that only one man at a time engaged him. They need not have bothered about being so analytical. Frost's first blow downed his opponent and dissipated the courage of the other roughs who had gathered to have a hand in taming an Indian.

Later, diversion of a different sort got under way for John on the floor of a dance pavilion in Greycliff. It is worthy of note that John's marriage to a fine, part-blood Chippewa girl had occurred in

the meantime. An itinerant preacher named Forbus had ventured to suggest that the music and stamping of feet cease for a brief period while he made the announcement of some gospel services he intended to conduct in the community. He said that he hoped to secure permission to use that dance pavilion for the meetings at Greycliff. The sponsors of the dance, for some reason, were in an ugly, inhospitable mood and became noisy in their refusals. Gun-play by an overenthusiastic customer, during the progress of which he might extinguish a light or two, perforate a few boards in the dance-floor, or otherwise disfigure the interior decorations, in certain frontier communities was deemed a legitimate way to express good feeling and neighborly sociability. In the present instance the senior promoter of the dance called for a rail and volunteers to give the " black frock " a ride out of town. There were a few of the tougher element present who seemed disposed to consider the suggestion favorably. John Frost was present with his wife to dance, but he did not object to a little religion thrown in as an extra treat for his money. The emergency found him in full control of his temper and his voice.

" If you want to abuse the stranger any more you can lick me first."

Nobody wanted to exchange blows with the Indian.

" The preacher wants to hold a meeting here," announced Frost to the gathering, " and I'm here to back him."

Big Timber prepared to listen.

After the announcement had been made "Elder" Forbus was conducted outside by his Indian backer.

"If you travel up that road," exact directions were given, "you will find my house, where you can hold a meeting every night in the week and for as long as you like."

The meetings at John's home started a religious revival in the neighborhood. Sixty-four people professed conversion during the two weeks of their duration. The usual Sunday drinking carousals at the main crossing of Lower Deer Creek were broken up. Men known for their godlessness became the ardent promoters of a Sunday school that was greatly needed in Greycliff.

In just what manner and to what extent this incident affected the spiritual development of the Carlisle Indian who had fled from his reservation lest he return to the blanket, may not be determined. He made no profession of religious faith in the meetings made possible by his hospitality. Doubtless they were of immeasurable value in tiding him over a difficult period of his life.

The stand John Frost took in defense of Elder Forbus combined with other evidences of his courage and forthright living brought him prominently to the attention of the better social element of Big Timber as well as the county politicians, and in the course of time he was induced to quit ranching and accept the position of deputy sheriff, taking up his residence in Big Timber.

For several years the officers of the law and the

stockmen of the country had been waging a bitter and unsuccessful war against an organized gang of horse-and-cattle thieves operating a chain between Wyoming and Idaho. Stock was driven out of the lower country and exchanged for horses or cattle stolen from the ranches further north. Short, swift night drives enabled the thieves to return to their homes before daylight to establish their alibis. John gathered much of the evidence that involved several prominent men in the county as robber captains, and thereby broke up the outfits that had been harassing the ranchmen and stock-raisers over a wide territory.

John's friendly disposition and sense of humor as well as his stark courage carried him through many tight places while deputy sheriff, winning for him the friendship of prisoners and the approval of the voters. He lived in a day on the frontier when an officer of the law saw plenty of action.

One morning he received a call at the county building to hurry up Main Street to arrest the local blacksmith who had barricaded himself behind the fire-engine in the engine-room of the fire department and was standing off the town marshal and some men he had called to his assistance. Several had been hurt by the defiant iron-man.

John walked into the fire-house, locked the door to keep out the crowd, and mildly inquired of the man at bay whether he would come along peaceably or compel an officer of the law to fight it out with him. On no occasion during his service as a deputy sheriff did the Indian use a gun unnecessarily.

MRS. ANNA KREIG (W. A.) PETZOLDT

In Crow Ceremonial Dress Presented to Her by Indian Friends
Photo Taken in 1903

"I'll go with you, Jack, if you don't let those fellows out there hurt me."

"I protect my prisoners."

John recalled an Indian at Carlisle who stood off the school authorities behind a pile of dumb-bells. When John had been ordered as captain of his company to arrest the student the latter had begged for protection. From such experiences he learned that fear put men in the most dangerous mood; also that it was fatal for an officer to show fear.

A young tramp passing through Big Timber on a freight, shot at and wounded a brakeman when ordered off the train and then fled to the hills. John went out on his trail. Just as he topped a rise covered with dwarf pine the officer was accosted.

"Hands up!"

John sensed rather than saw the fugitive's gun pointing at the pit of his stomach. In imagination he felt a cold draft of air blowing through his vitals. He gave no indication that he had heard the order to elevate his hands.

"Do you happen to know the way to Columbus?" asked John with quiet unconcern as he scanned the landscape—any place rather than the muzzle of the tramp's revolver.

"I'm on my way there, pardner." The gun was slipped out of sight. The two walked down the hill together to the officer's automobile. The Indian nabbed his man and disarmed him as the latter was about to climb into the rear seat. The trainman lived. After serving a short sentence in the penitentiary, the man with the quick draw returned to

the valley of the Yellowstone and became a respectable and respected bread-earner.

By reason of his record as deputy sheriff a great honor came to John Frost. Prior to a campaign to determine the candidates of the rival political parties for the office of sheriff, the two prominent aspirants for the position came to John and inquired of him what he intended to do. Both offered to withdraw from the race in case he wanted the office. With five children, wife, and mother to live for, John yielded to Mrs. Frost's entreaties to seek a less hazardous employment. Since his hasty departure from Fort Custer he had not lost his desire to return to the Crow reservation. He now planned to establish himself there as a farmer. It fell out that other activities for which he was eminently fitted, awaited him within the borders of the reservation.

Sim Simonsen, former round-up cook for the JD cattle outfit, having acquired considerable property, was looking about for a man to help him maintain a general merchandise store at Pryor, a Crow subagency, and hit upon John Frost as the best man available. Since the day Simonsen had induced the young JD horse-wrangler to abandon the range in favor of the schoolroom, he had followed his course with keen interest.

Behind Sim Simonsen's store counters in Pryor, John Frost became an institution in the land of the Absaroka. By reason of his reputation as an interpreter and public-spirited citizen, government officials as well as members of the Crow Nation sought his services in the straightening out of difficult

situations in the conduct of the business and legal affairs of the Indians. He became a member of the business committee of the Crow Nation, a position which necessitated frequent trips to Washington. His record at Washington and in district Federal Courts became one that any socially-minded citizen might covet. He had a simple formula in business, diplomacy, and litigation, although his success in securing the confidence of his fellow tribesmen as well as of United States officials was a source of mystery to many. His formula may be defined by the one word *truth*. He became the despair of men who sought to exploit the natural wealth of the Crow Nation for private gain. He has not hesitated to labor for the rights of the Crows in their attempts to derive appreciable incomes from grazing, farmland, and oil leases.

One day John's reluctance to lend his influence with Chief Plenty Coups to carry through a transaction overtaxed the patience of a certain white man. The latter tried intimidation.

"Frost, I believe you are a crook!" he declared. "I understand that you are not even a Crow by birth."

The uncompromising red man stated his opinion of the white man and walked away.

John Frost always has been a Crow in spirit as well as by adoption. His life has been inexorably bound up with the lives of his people.

During his long absence from the reservation a change in the social order thereon had taken place. Groups of Indians had been formed that were

standing out against the old tribal practises. Furthermore, the members of these groups were retaining their standing in the tribe. Influences that helped to bring about the change and were to have a tremendous bearing upon the subsequent life of John Frost had their beginnings when Burgess and Petzoldt, the pioneer missionaries on the Little Bighorn, began their labors.

IX

THE CROSS ON THE LITTLE BIGHORN

"If I were a master of all the languages I could not find words to express my gratitude for what the gospel has done for my people."

The Crow Agency, during John Frost's lifetime, has been located at three different places. When he was an infant the agency was on Mission Creek not far from the Yellowstone River; in 1874 it was removed to the valley of the Stillwater on Rosebud Creek at a point about a mile from the present town of Absaroka; some time after the Custer fight the agency was brought east to the Little Bighorn where it has remained to the present time. Crow Agency, within two miles of the old Custer battlefield, has become a town of considerable importance on the main line of the Burlington Railroad.

Some of the most difficult and perplexing problems that have confronted the United States Government in its dealings with the red men, have arisen in connection with the maintenance and conduct of boarding-schools on Indian reservations. Circumstances compelled their use in the earlier days.

No matter how well the government managed its school at Crow Agency, the Indians called it the "weaning pen." It was the only available school for Crows within a radius of twenty miles, and chil-

dren of all ages were admitted, some of them still "babies" in the eyes of their parents.[1]

While the Crow mothers at Lodge Grass brooded, the old men met in council. Something had to be done about securing a school near-by so that the children could be kept at home. The Crows knew that on other reservations missionaries had come to conduct elementary schools. Why could they not have such schools? They resolved to send a delegation to Sheridan to hold a council with Rev. W. A. Petzoldt, a young minister there who had become their friend.

As a result of the council, another was held in June of the following year in the valley of the Little Bighorn, twenty-seven years, almost to the day, after Custer's disastrous engagement with the Sioux and Cheyennes in the same valley. Representing the Crow Nation were some of the chiefs who met General Gibbon in the memorable council of war at Absaroka. Present also was Petzoldt of Sheridan, and two or three clergymen who represented a national mission board. The Indians realized the importance of the occasion and conducted the council with true Indian decorum. The medicine-pipe was passed around, the object of the council was stated, and then one after another the older Indians spoke. Medicine Crow, head chief at Lodge Grass, White Arm, Bull That Goes Hunting, Shows A Fish, One Goose, Grey Bull, Scold The Bear, One Star, and other leading men of the tribe in turn stepped

[1] The government boarding-school on the Crow Reservation was discontinued when the present system of public day-schools was established.

into the center of the circle, gravely shook hands with the visitors, stood in silence for a few moments, and then spoke, first to their own people and then to the white visitors.

The supreme desire of the Indians was to obtain a school for the Lodge Grass district. To this request the visitors replied that a missionary and teacher might be sent, the latter to instruct the younger children in a day-school until it became necessary to send them to the agency school. Some of the Indians feared the coming of a missionary would put an end to their dances. Others wanted the visitors to promise to assume full charge of the education of their children. Five hours were spent in speechmaking and the first session of the council closed without agreement. The older men were deeply concerned and arranged for a second meeting with the "big chiefs from New York." To show their appreciation of the importance of the occasion, Medicine Crow and Wolf Lies Down removed the beaded moccasins from their feet, gave them to the senior church official and walked home barefoot before their people.

No agreement was reached during the second session of the council, but on the following day there was a great stir throughout the encampment the outcome of which was a request from the Indians that a missionary and a teacher be sent to Lodge Grass without delay. In the meantime the Indian agent had expressed his approval of the plan to open a mission and school on the Upper Little Bighorn where fully five hundred Crows were within easy

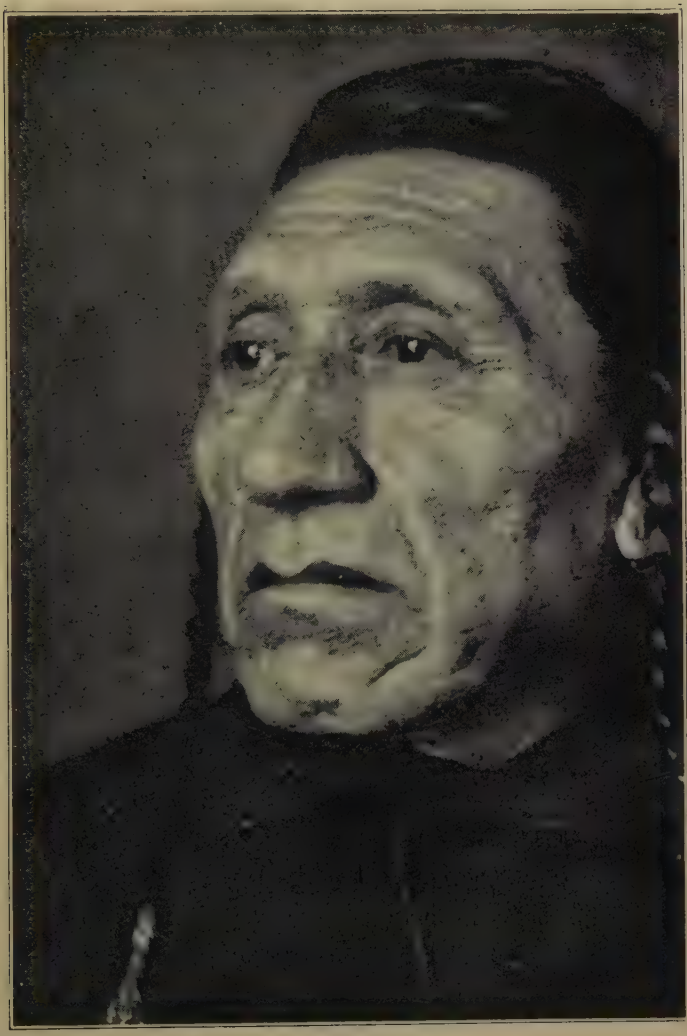
reach. The Indians promised to assist in the erection of a mission house.

The ministry of Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Petzoldt among the Crows began December 1, 1903.

It had been planned that pending the completion of a residence for the missionary's family, Mrs. Petzoldt would remain in Sheridan with the two children. The keen-witted and generous-hearted White Arm broke up this plan. The loneliness of the missionary did not escape him. He and his wife went back to the primitive method of living in a tent—in midwinter at that—and welcomed the Petzoldt family into the house they had vacated—an example of Indian hospitality that is characteristic of the Crows as a tribe.

The Crows did not ask for the gospel; they wanted schools. But the coming of the Petzoldts meant the coming of the gospel. In their daily living Christ was revealed.

A trip in December, 1903, to the Wolf Mountains with the Lodge Grass Indians for logs with which to build the mission's buildings, was an early test for Petzoldt. He was not inured to the rigors of camp life in the dead of winter. He slept in White Arm's tepee during the five weeks spent in the mountains. The Indians engaged in this volunteer service in the spirit of a huge, happy logging-bee in which Pretty Enemy, a squaw, excelled all others in the felling of trees. The snow was deep, the thermometer often registering zero weather and lower. Three days were spent in scouting before a suitable place to cut the straight pines was found.



ONE STAR

Roads had to be built in some of the mountain draws for the loaded sleds. To avoid the steeper slopes, bridges were built across ravines. The mountainside where the logs were secured was so steep that a foothold had first to be made for the chopper before an axe could be used.

Five hundred logs were trailed to the base of the mountains with pony and lariat, and then hauled to the temporary camp on Little Owl Creek three miles away. Here they were reloaded for the long journey to Lodge Grass; over thirty teams engaged in this task, and several expeditions to the mountains were necessary.

Every night the Indians would gather and ask the missionary to give "Jesus Talks." No tent was large enough to hold all the Indians; the services took on the form of group meetings.

Petzoldt came down from the mountains to the Little Bighorn to spend his first Christmas on the Crow Reservation with his family. He found a large number of Indians in camp on an island near Bull Weasel's allotment. On Christmas night the Indians engaged in one of their pagan dances in a large tent. When the chiefs were asked if a Christmas service might be held they conferred, hesitated, and finally gave consent on condition that the service would be short. A camp crier was ordered to tell the people to sit down wherever they happened to be in the circle of the dance. The missionary read the story of the birth at Bethlehem, told what the coming of the Saviour might mean to any tribe or people, and closed with prayer, but had hardly said

"Amen" when the rhythmic beating of the tom-toms brought the Indians again to their feet and into the shuffle of the dance.

When the Petzoldts took up their residence at Lodge Grass there were no roads, no bridges, no town, no public schools, no whites except a few government people and Indian traders. There was one small store near the junction of Lodge Grass Creek and the Little Bighorn. Neither butter, milk, or eggs were procurable locally the first year.

Before the passing of the winter of 1903-1904, Cedric, the younger child of Mr. and Mrs. Petzoldt, died of pneumonia following measles. Beneath the soil in an unused part of the mission compound the little body was laid to rest in a grave dug by a group of cowboys who had ridden in to express their sympathy.

From Lodge Grass to the most remote sections of the reservation was carried the news of the great bereavement of the white man and his wife who had come to take up life with the Crow people. To the home of the Petzoldts came the Indians to sit by the hour, saying nothing. Their silence, as they watched the faces of the missionaries, was evidence of their friendly regard. The white people did not leave them; neither did they show anger against their God because the child had been taken from them by death. The Petzoldts went ahead cheerfully with the construction of the mission buildings. These things the Crows observed. In time they too learned the meaning of the Cross.

The burial of Cedric, combined with other in-

fluences, marked the beginning of the abandonment by the Crow Indians of the practise of placing bodies of the departed on scaffolds, in trees, or among the rocks on the mountain slopes. They asked the missionaries for permission to bury their children in plots of ground near the small grave of Cedric, the "Jesus baby." The stone nearest the tablet erected by the Indians "In Memory of Little Cedric" has carved upon it the name "Grose Rides The White Hipped Horse." The white man after whom the latter had been named is a well-known editor and author who had become greatly interested in the mission.

The formal opening and dedication of the chapel, manse, and schoolhouse at Lodge Grass occurred in September, 1904. The first Indian church at Lodge Grass, consisting of five members (Mr. and Mrs. Petzoldt, White Arm, his wife, Pretty Shell, and Pretty Enemy), was organized in November, 1905. Petzoldt's ministry widened. He made trips by wagon and saddle of one to three weeks' duration to many remote sections of the reservation.

Strong opposition from the dance element among the Crows developed from the beginning, and came to a head when One Star, a persistent reactionary, led a delegation of twenty-five Indians to the chapel on the Little Bighorn one Sunday morning. The building was crowded to overflowing, as One Star had broadcast a threat that he was going to "tear the Jesus road up by the roots and throw it away." At the close of the service, Horse That Whinnies, a member of One Star's band, stood at the exit and

commanded the people to sit down, saying that no one would be permitted to leave the room. Petzoldt ordered otherwise. He told the Indians that any one who desired to leave could do so; but that he also would be glad to hear any complaint that One Star or other Indians desired to present in an orderly way. One Star stated that Petzoldt was breaking up the old Indian dances, but in answer to a question could name no occasion when the missionary had invaded a dance for the purpose of denouncing it. Shows A Fish then called for volunteers to cross the room and stand with him beside the missionary as a token of their endorsement of what the missionaries were trying to do for the Crows. A score of the most influential Indians at Lodge Grass took this opportunity to declare themselves in accord with the Christian workers, and finally One Star found himself in a small minority.

For many years One Star remained actively hostile, but happily his opposition finally gave place to enthusiastic cooperation. He loves the fellowship afforded by the Crow church at Lodge Grass, and is often asked by the missionaries to speak in public. In nearly all of his addresses he refers regretfully to those days when he was actively opposed to any influence that caused the Crows to forsake the old ways of the red man. He pleads with the young people to prepare themselves for Christian leadership so that they may continue the work begun by the white missionaries.

One of the young braves who followed Wraps Up His Tail in the only uprising of the Crows was Bird

Well Known. The year of this outbreak was 1887. Only the Indian leader in the uprising and one white man were killed. Bird Well Known was captured and sent to Florida as a prisoner. Later he was released on parole and sent to Carlisle. He was living in the Bighorn Valley when the Petzoldts opened the mission at Lodge Grass. One night in midwinter while a prolonged snow-storm was in progress, he traveled with his wife from the Bighorn to Lodge Grass, a distance of forty miles, to hear the "Jesus Story." We have the story as Petzoldt tells it:

"He asked us to start at the beginning and tell us all about it. He and his wife came into our home, and we spent some time in going over the story of the Cross. We then knelt in prayer, and they gave their hearts to Jesus Christ.

"From the very beginning the transformation, that afterwards proved so wonderful, was apparent. In quite a visible fashion the old things began to pass away, and all things became new. He proved to be one of the sunniest-tempered, dependable, four-square fellows it has been our privilege to know. He was soon afterward appointed as one of our active mission workers, and by his quiet way and luminous life led one after another of the Crows into the Jesus Road.

"He got up in service one Sunday and said: 'I have thrown away my old life, and my old heart. I have a new life, and God has given me a new heart. Now, why cannot I throw away my old name, and have a new name, as I have a new heart?' So

they talked it over, and the old name, Bird Well Known, was thrown away, and the new name, White Mouth, was given him, by which name he was afterward known."

The first baptismal service at Pryor was held for twenty-one adult Crow Indians, nearly all of whom were the fruitage and harvest of White Mouth's faithful seed-sowing.

"He different now," said one old chief. "White Mouth, he used to be bad man, drink, curse, steal other men's wives, treat his squaw bad, but now he do no such things. We want to be different. We want to be like White Mouth. He love his squaw, and she love him. We want our squaws love us. White Mouth says it is the Jesus road."

The gospel brought to the Little Bighorn by the Petzoldts, the conversion and the faithful ministry of Bird Well Known who like Paul took a new name after the light broke, the coming of the women missionaries, and the establishment of a station at Pryor, were events that may be enumerated as contributory causes leading to the whole-hearted enlistment of John Frost in Christian service. Let us also keep in mind Carlisle.

John Frost, at first, kept away from the religious services at Pryor although his wife and children attended regularly. Yet there was no man in the community who had less sympathy than he for those who opposed the work of the missionaries. On more than one occasion he sought out men who had spoken slightingly of the women workers and

warned them against any repetition of the offense. Slanders ceased, but Frost still absented himself from the meetings in the mission chapel.

The silent message of missionary devotion, the eloquence of brave and sincere achievement, finally won the heart of this Indian. One day he was selling goods to a customer in the trader's store where he was employed, and noted the utter selfishness of the person. Involuntarily he placed this example of worldliness against the selfless living of the two young women whom a mission board had sent a thousand miles from their homes to carry to a neglected tribe of Indians the story of a Saviour's life and sacrifice. He accepted the invitation of his older daughter to attend church that night and surrendered to the claims of Christ upon his affection and devoted service. He started on a trail that has had no turning. From that memorable day he has not wavered in his loyalty to the Christian faith. His humility when speaking of Jesus and his debt in view of what the Nazarene has done for him, his family, and his tribe, have characterized his message. In 1927 he was ordained to the Christian ministry. For several years prior to that event he had served as a missionary pastor. Recently upon rejecting a government position paying over three times his present salary, he wrote to a friend: "Your welcome letter finds us looking for Christ. After all, what work can a man do to beat it? None!" He is a pastor among the Crows at the present writing. Strong Face, his mother, is numbered among the Christians of the tribe.

Ten thousand delegates in the Chicago Coliseum during a session of a convention in June, 1927, will not forget the brief yet thrilling message Frost brought from the Crow people. It follows:

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS:

I shall try to give you an idea as to how things were when your missionaries first came among us, twenty-five years ago, and what great changes they have wrought among my people, God bless them.

The pioneers of your race that came among us fifty years ago were men seeking wealth, wanting to get rich quickly, and in order to gain their end they brought whiskey among us so as to make us an easy prey. They were careless in handling the truth and broke their promises, one after another, and when we could not trust them any more they said, "The only good Indian is a dead one."

The Indian is naturally religious; when he believes he believes with all his might. If you had come among us when Mr. Petzoldt and Doctor Kinney (a denominational director of Indian missions) did you would have found us worshiping idols. We believed in a Great Spirit, and we believed that the mountain lions, the bears, the wolves, coyotes, and in fact all animals, birds, streams, and springs were messengers of the Great Spirit. When we used to roam the prairies and had to cross a creek or river, we gave some offering; if a river, a choice piece of meat or pemmican; if a creek, beads.

In order to gain favor from these many message-carriers of the Great Spirit, worshipers would go to the mountains and choose some high point, then fast for days, neither eating nor drinking. In some cases they would chop off the index finger at the first joint as a sacrifice, or tear strips of skin from the body as an offering. Again they would set a post in the ground on some high point, and on top of this post, which was nearly ten feet high, fasten a buffalo's or bear's head. Two rawhide ropes which hung to the ground

SHOT IN THE HAND

Old-time Warrior Who Became a Christian

were fastened to the post just below the head. Then the man who was to make the sacrifice had his breast bared and two strips cut in the flesh on each side. A stick was put under the flesh on each side of his breast, across, and fastened to the two ropes from the post. He went around and around this post, pulling backward and blowing a whistle made from the wing bone of an eagle. He went until he broke himself loose. After all day, if the skin refused to break, he was pulled loose by a friend. When a dear one died, the relatives would cut their legs and arms, stab their heads, and chop off the ends of their fingers, wailing and crying, "I shall never see you again; no never! Oh! what shall I do?"

Thank God, these terrible things are not seen any more. Great changes have taken place and many of the Crows are rejoicing in a Saviour's love, and climbing the trail to that happy land above. There have been nearly five hundred baptisms; we now have five Indian churches and our own Indian Association. There is so much to be thankful for.

Shot-In-The-Hand, one of the oldest members of the tribe, who died last October, just before he passed away prayed: "O God, forgive me for cutting and scarring this body you gave me. Grant, O Lord, that not one of my children will do as I did in worshiping the wrong gods. I did not know any better."

Bear Claw, another old Indian, who walked faithfully in the Jesus Road, said to me just before he died, his face beaming with light and joy, "Brother, please do not pray for my recovery, for I am anxious to go to this place the missionaries have told about, where there is no sorrow, and no tears, and no good-bye, and I want to see the wonderful Jesus."

These are some of the many things your missionaries have brought to my people. Oh! If I were a master of all the languages I could not find words to express my gratitude today for what the gospel has done for my people and for me. I can only say, God bless you, God bless the work and the workers among the Crows.

In contrast to the pagan scenes witnessed by Petzoldt on Christmas night, 1903, it is of interest to recall that on Christmas day, twenty-five years later, the Christian Indians at Lodge Grass, among whom the Petzoldts still labor, sang carols throughout the day, visiting the Indian camps and the residences of the whites, and at night put on a pageant that would have reflected credit upon any church. On Christmas Eve the officials of the Burlington Railroad ordered the two through night trains to stop at Lodge Grass for five minutes to allow a group of Christian Indians to sing carols to the passengers while other Indians passed through the cars to distribute Christmas cards made by the Indians.

In 1927 John Frost was invited to preach a series of sermons to the Indians of Western Oklahoma. This gospel itinerary has had few parallels in the history of Indian missions. One of his illustrations follows:

> You know in the olden times we Indians used to worship the eagle, and would capture them and tie them to stakes in our camps. Not long ago in our Montana mountains I came upon the camp of an Indian friend who had one chained. I told him that it ought not to be and that the eagle's home was in the high peaks and clouds. Finally I persuaded him to let it be unchained. But it would not leave. We tried to frighten it, but it knew we were friends. It had not entirely lost its power of flight because it could fly on a platform at the end of its chain. Finally we carried it up on a neighboring peak and whipped it with our coats. Then it flew away; higher and higher it soared until it landed on one of the highest peaks in sight.
>
> That is just like a lot of you Indians now. You have been in the captivity of sin so long that you have forgotten the

pure heights where you might live. You have learned to like "the pleasures of sin," and you do not want to enjoy the freedom and purity that Christ has made possible for you.

After one of his sermons sixty Indians came forward for confession and baptism or restoration. In that service there were present Kiowas, Apaches, Cheyennes, Wichitas, and Comanches. Five interpreters were employed, all speaking to their respective sections of the audience at the same time. The Kiowas recently sent John another urgent invitation to come to Oklahoma.

X

RED NECK GETS A NEW NAME

"When I speak to white people I look them squarely in the eye."

John Frost chose wisely the land to which he and the members of his family were entitled under the allotment acts. He picked out land not far from Billings where soil and climatic conditions favor the growing of wheat. Just before he made his application an old blind Indian named Rides The Pretty Horse asked him where he was going to locate. John told him.

"That is the kind of land I want for myself and family," said the old Indian. "I can't see to work. I can lease that land, and it will keep me from going hungry during my old age."

It was the way of a good Crow to allow the choice discovery to pass into the hands of his friend. John wanted it, but Rides The Pretty Horse got it. The former took his disappointment standing up and chose land on the bench above Pryor Creek where he judged the conditions to be ideal for the raising of wheat and other farm products. He is leasing it for grazing purposes only. He is hoping that his children will some day raise crops on their allotments, making permanent homes thereon.

"Our people gradually are losing possession of their allotments," commented John Frost recently

when he viewed a large poster advertising Indian land for sale. "Land is the only permanent source of income the uneducated Indian has. Congress should amend the allotment acts so as to make it impossible for Indians readily to dispose of inherited land."

John Frost feels that it is his mission as a pastor to advise his people to hold their lands. The recent report of a survey [1] made at the request of Secretary Work of the Department of the Interior bears him out in his contention.

The problem of inherited land should be given thorough detailed study. . . It is doubtful if the serious nature of this problem was appreciated at the time the allotment acts were passed. Because of this feature of the allotment system the land of the Indians is rapidly passing into the hands of the whites, and a generation of landless, almost penniless, unadjusted Indians is coming on. What happens is this: The Indian to whom the land was allotted dies leaving several heirs. Actual division of the land among them is impracticable. The estate is either leased or sold to whites, and the proceeds are divided among the heirs and are used for living expenses. So long as one member of the family of heirs has land the family is not landless or homeless, but as time goes on the last of the original allottees will die, and the public will have the landless, unadjusted Indians on its hands.

The solution appears to be for the government vigorously to exercise its power of guardianship in the control and regulation of property secured by inheritance. If the land itself passes to the heirs, they should not be permitted to sell without government sanction unless all the heirs are competent. So long as any of the heirs are minors or

[1] *The Problem of Indian Administration*, studies made by the Institute for Government Research; The John Hopkins Press, 1928.

incompetent the government should exercise its control. The money arising from inheritances accruing to incompetent Indians should be expended only for land or for other productive purposes. The government itself, through the use of a revolving fund, should purchase the inherited land and sell it to the Indians subject to restrictions, using their accumulation of inherited funds as part or all of the purchase money. If the inherited funds are not sufficient liberal reimbursable terms should be arranged. The object sought would be twofold, to prevent the rising generation of Indians from being landless and to stop the use of inherited money as a means of sustaining the Indians in a life of irresponsible idleness. This solution would meet the difficulty encountered when a young Indian has an inherited share in several different allotments, none of which are contiguous or large enough to give him a fair-sized working area. The estates could be purchased by the government and sold to the Indians in workable units, subject to restrictions.

The steady, remorseless invasions of the whites continue. Today white aggression does not advance at the point of the bayonet but at the point of the pen. The check book and not the treaty is settling the fate of the reservation Indian. The Crows fear that along the choice streams the stockmen will secure water frontage wherever they can get it, and thus in time control the Indians' grazing-lands contiguous to the streams. Long, narrow, winding strips of land, like the enveloping folds of huge serpents, may some day help to crush out the life of the tribe.

"Of what value will our grazing-lands be to us if we allow our creeks and water-holes to pass into the hands of white men?" the Indian pastor demands. "When the stockmen control all of our

water they can get the grazing-land at their own price."

If protective laws are not speedily passed irretrievable harm will be done, contends the Crow pastor.

The Crow people come to John Frost with questions he cannot answer satisfactorily.

"If the Osage and Creek Indians have been made wealthy by their oil-lands why is the oil that flows from wells discovered on our lands allowed to go to waste?"

Huge, black columns of smoke arise occasionally from the Soap Creek oil-field to remind the Crow of his "black gold."

"Do not wait for the white man's enterprises to bring wealth to you," advises John. "Your land is your wealth. Do not sell it to pay living expenses. Learn how to work it. Plow, sow, reap. Be thrifty. Do not keep your children out of school. Do not loaf."

First prizes for agricultural products have been won at local fairs by members of the Frost family.

John Frost is grateful that the training he received at Carlisle made it possible for him to make his way as a bread-winner in competition with white men. Captain Pratt would have rejoiced could he have followed his course year by year. But today John finds greater satisfaction in the knowledge that Crow boys and girls on the reservation are able to adopt the Christian way of life without losing their standing in the tribe. Groups of Indians may visit neighboring groups and engage in as whole-

some social pastimes as are enjoyed by young people in any American community. The Christ of the Crow Indian trails has made this possible. John is happy that he has had a part in the introduction of the gospel to his people. To his credit it may be said that he has kept his children in school. Four have entered colleges. A daughter recently was graduated from Ottawa University, the first Crow to receive a bachelor's degree. She is now teaching in Bacone College, a school for Indian youth in Oklahoma, where one of her brothers is Editor-in-chief of the student publication, *The Bacone Indian.*

The writer desired to visit the Pryor Mission where John Frost began his ministry and where Chief Plenty Coups resides. The Indian missionary chose a brilliant day in October to accommodate his visitor. Nearly two years had passed since the Indian preacher had been transferred from Pryor to his present mission station on the Upper Bighorn. The journey of one hundred miles by automobile took one down the Bighorn Valley, across a series of waterless hills and mesas, and finally up the verdant Pryor Valley past the battlefield where the Crow and Sioux many years ago fought for supremacy.

A crowd of old Indian acquaintances greeted Frost at Pryor. All wanted to know when he was coming back to live near them again. Old Stone Breast put his hand on John's shoulder and chided him at length as a father might a wayward son. "We want you to come back to us again," was the repeated request of the aged Indian.

CHIEF FLENTY COUPES COUNTERS NAME OF FLENTY
GROWS UPON JOHN FROST

Frost had some special greeting for every man, woman, and child. They spoke of intimate things as do members of one family. It was near sundown when he introduced his companion to Plenty Coups and his wife, who were sitting on a long side-veranda, facing the west. The genial countenance of the old chief is something fine to remember. Men of prominence in this and other lands do not hesitate to say that they love him. Famous Indian warriors of other tribes have spoken of him as "Chief of the Chiefs."

October days in Montana are like purest white-water diamonds and more to be desired. Under warm, blue skies, in Pryor Cañon, camp was made. Chief Plenty Coups, a few of his Indian neighbors, two or three white friends, John Frost and Chick Suis, the old Indian scout and buffalo-hunter, were among those who made up the party. John Frost assisted the chief from the automobile and helped him spread a blanket on the ground near the camp-fire. Chick Suis, lately from the Blackfeet Reservation, was glad to chat with Plenty Coups again. Many years had passed since the two had seen each other.

"It is too bad that we must see only our fading selves," said Plenty Coups when he welcomed Chick Suis.

The two old friends were left to themselves until they had their visit out, then others joined them until half a dozen sat on the ground around the old chief.

Plenty Coups became intimately reminiscent.

Above him towered Plenty Coups Peak, a lofty castellated formation that has many counterparts overlooking Pryor Valley. The rock was named in honor of the chief who, early in life, fasted thereon when the Crow nation was being continually harassed by its enemies. On this rock he fasted and waited for the "vision" which determined his medicine, the eagle. There he fasted and mourned after his father's death, memorializing his loss by shooting away the first joint of a forefinger. Across the valley opposite Plenty Coups Peak arose the massive wall called Arrow Head Rock, within which was supposed to dwell a dwarf so mighty that he could throw a buffalo over his shoulder and carry it to his home. The Indians of long ago shot their arrows against the rock to supply the dwarf with enough missiles for his buffalo hunts. Plenty Coups pointed toward the foot of Arrow Head Rock to indicate a former camp-site of the Crows where they assembled for the sun-dance, a ceremony performed only when the warrior who pledged it desired to gain revenge on some enemy who had killed a relative.

"From the camp our hunters went out in the evening and crept upon the deer and elk feeding on yonder hills," said the chief. "They hid behind trees and killed meat for our camp. In this valley we killed buffalo. All gone now."

The chief indicated the series of rock cairns extending from Arrow Head Rock to the gateway of Pryor Cañon, and said that it was made by the Crow caravans during many generations, even before the

dog gave way to the horse as beast of burden, because an old woman had foretold, after a reputed vision, that the Crow would prosper as long as men added rocks to these piles when they passed up and down the valley.

Of the battles in which Plenty Coups had taken part he named Crook's bitter and indecisive conflict against the Sioux in the Wolf Mountains, less than nine days prior to the washing out of Custer and his immortal cavalrymen by the same Indian warriors on the Little Bighorn. Plenty Coups had responded to General Crook's request for aid by going into the fracas on Wolf Mountain with one hundred and twenty-five of his warriors after a swift ride from the Upper Bighorn. Plenty Coups relates that he fought with Crook from sunrise until sundown.

Of the band Plenty Coups led against the Sioux under our flag but seven men remain. Slowly he named them: Bell Rock, Cuts the Bear's Ear, Big Nose, Bear Crane, The Crane, Coyote That Runs, Find and Kills Him. Little Fire, another of his warriors, died in September, 1927. Plenty Coups has had little aid from the white man; he freely responded when the white man needed his help. At Washington he is known as the best Indian friend the United States has had.

Plenty Coups is nearing the end of the trail. Realizing this he did not allow John Frost to leave him without making his visit memorable by conferring a name upon him. Since his youth Frost has been known among the Crows as Red Neck.

"It is time," said Plenty Coups, "for us to drop

the name, Red Neck, which was given you because of a birthmark, for one that you have earned."

Frank Shively, Crow historian, was the interpreter. He also subscribed his name as witness to the benign action of the aged chief.

This day, I, Chief Plenty Coups, bestow upon John Frost (known among Crows as Red Neck) the name Plenty Crows [*Absaroka Ahoosh*].

CHIEF PLENTY COUPS.
His (x) Mark.

Plenty Crows—a name well chosen for the man who has shepherded his people!

Turning to Plenty Crows' guest, the chief requested the latter to carry to friends outside the reservation a message.

I wish to say a few words to you regarding the spiritual and material needs of my people, [said Plenty Coups, Frank Shively interpreting]. One year ago last August we had with us at Pryor John Frost as our helper and our leader, and suddenly and for no reason that we could discern he was taken from us and placed on a field new to him where he had to begin all over again. You may think I am biased when I make this request, as these are my people, but I am speaking for both John and my people and trying not to be biased. John is well qualified. I will not be with my people much longer. I am soon to go. My work is about done. I am anxious to go and want to leave John in my place. He understands the Indian better than a white man.

I am Chief Plenty Coups, friend of the white people as well as of the Crow Nation. When I speak to a white man I get to interpret for me a man I am sure will speak the truth for me. From the time the white people first came into this country, from the trappers and the prospectors down

to the farmers and the stockmen and the people in the large cities of the southern part of Montana, these people are my friends. They never have received ill-treatment from me either by word or deed. Against the invasions of the other tribes to do the whites bodily harm I protected them. But all that is history.

But now I am weak and need the assistance of good white people in the matter of the landed possessions of my people, that these possessions may be protected from land-grabbers either by fraud, or so-called legitimate aggression. Scott Leavitt, Congressman from Montana, and Senator Walsh, Frank Bird Linderman, author, and Senator Kendrick of Wyoming, all are helping me, and I want you to help me all you can. By all means send John back to Pryor.

When I speak to white people I look them squarely in the eye because I am conscious that I have not intentionally wronged them. If any have done it [the chief may have had in mind the abortive attempt of Wraps Up His Tail to lead an uprising among the Crows], it was done without my sanction, and for it I was sorry every time. I am not going to be here much longer. I want John here to help introduce my young people into the advancing civilization which Indians and white men must share alike.

XI

CHIEF PLENTY COUPS

"As the coming ages pass you will hear of many of my race holding places of high honor and trust."

Chief Plenty Coups, in the sunset of his career, was selected by the War Department to represent the Indian tribes of North America at the memorial services on the occasion of the burial of the unknown soldier in the Arlington Heights National Cemetery. This was deserved recognition of the chief's unfailing friendship for the United States. John Frost also was selected for this honor. Without him Chief Plenty Coups would have felt lost in Washington. Here was indicated how abiding was the chief's regard for the man whom he had known as a boy and later as a government scout at Fort Custer, and still later as a ranchman, interpreter, business committeeman for the Crow nation, and in recent years as a minister of the gospel.

For many years Chief Plenty Coups has sought John Frost's counsel in matters affecting the welfare of either the Crow people or himself. This habit of the chief to rely upon Frost's judgment took an interesting turn not long ago when he halted an operation on his eyes until John was summoned to the government hospital at Crow Agency. The sight was completely gone from one eye and a delicate operation was necessary to preserve the use of the

other. The chief positively refused to make a decision. He simply wanted John, and it remained for John to say " yes " or " no." After consultation with the surgeons Frost told them to proceed with the case. During the operation the Indian pastor held the hands of the old man and interpreted for him the instructions of the surgeons.

Plenty Coups, traveling down the western slope of life, dreams of the past. He has outlived most of the old buffalo-eaters. Old scenes and old landmarks remind him that it will not be long before he will join in death the great chiefs who shared with him the honors of the war- and hunting-trails and the council-fires. He calls himself the friend of white men, and many white men have sought to honor him.

Not long ago it was proposed to Plenty Coups that as a memorial of his friendship for the white people a statue of himself should be placed on the lofty wall overlooking the Yellowstone River near Billings. He thought otherwise. In his mind there had taken shape a plan to perpetuate a memory of his long life of peace with his " white brothers." One day he called upon John Frost, at the latter's home, to disclose his plan—the plan of a great and generous chief.

" My son, I am not to live much longer," said the chief. " I want to leave my property so that the Indians and white men can enjoy it after I am gone. I want to be buried here near my home. If I will my home to you, I will die happy with the thought that the land and the buildings will be used accord-

ing to my wishes. I want my home to be a campground for my people forever."

John was deeply affected by this display of the trust the aged Indian leader placed in him. He thanked his friend but reminded him of the comparative brevity of human life, and suggested that the ownership of the property reside in some permanent public institution.

The advice of Superintendent Asbury of Crow Agency was sought, and under his guidance the chief's home and his land were willed to the United States Government to be held in perpetuity for the Crow people, and used as a public park by them and others irrespective of race and color.

"My reason for making this bequest of land for a permanent camping- and recreation-ground where my home is now located," Plenty Coups stated in his affidavit, "is that it may be a monument to the friendship I have always felt for the white people. Throughout my life I have never had any ill-feeling toward them and have tried to do what I could to cooperate with the white people and to advise my fellow tribesmen to do likewise, and I desire that this park may commemorate that attitude and be a reminder to Indians and white people that the two races should live and work together harmoniously."

In a pleasant valley watered by many springs, lies the two hundred-acre site which Plenty Coups has willed to the American people. Within a few miles is Pryor Cañon in its majestic setting of "castle rocks" above which towers Plenty Coups Peak. Lying at the gateway to a wilderness of mountains

NEW CHIVERS MEMORIAL BUILDING
Crow Mission, Lodge Grass, Montana
Airplane View

CROW TOMB IN A TREE

and valleys of surpassing beauty within thirty miles of Billings, Plenty Coups' home-site will in time afford a camping-place for thousands of tourists. It may be reached by automobile over a good highway. Here on August 8, 1928, "where the snows of more than fifty winters have fallen upon his tepee," Plenty Coups called together his friends to witness this final act of one of the last of the red men who saw the passing of the Northwest into the hands of the whites. Beautiful in its conception and execution, Plenty Coups' gesture of friendship may not be equalled in these closing days of the relations of the United States Government with a people long since dispossessed of their inheritance. His design was to make it the greatest "give-away" ceremony of the Crows.

In the presence of scores of Crow Indians and white men gathered in front of Plenty Coups' lodge, Brigadier-General James G. Harbord, acting under special commission from the Department of the Interior, accepted the chief's gift in behalf of the American people for use as a recreation park.

John Frost acted as interpreter for Plenty Coups and General Harbord. He waited until Plenty Coups delivered his entire address before he reproduced it in English, faithfully preserving its poetical form.

Said Plenty Coups to General Harbord:

"Many snows have fallen, marking the years I have lived at peace with my white neighbors. No red man has ever been shown so many honors as have I.

"My people—the Crow Nation—have not always been treated fairly. They hold no hate.

"Today, I, who have been called the chief of chiefs among red men, present to all the children of our Great White Father this land where snows for more than fifty winters have fallen on my tepee.

"This park is not to be a memorial to me, but to the Crow Nation. It is given as a token of my friendship for all people, both red and white.

"The Great Spirit is good to all his children, but it seems he loves his white children most. He has never shown my people how to do the many wonderful things his white children are doing. He did give us patience and love of home and children.

"Our old men have long pondered this matter in their councils, and we have now come to believe it is because we were late in finding the true God.

"Today one of our noblest red men [now Vice-president Curtis] has been chosen to represent this nation as a subchief to the Great White Father. We are proud of him. As the coming ages pass, you will hear of many others of my race holding places of high honor and trust.

"My people have ever been fighting men, and I believe the warrior ranks highest among all professional men. He fights for his women, his children, and his home. Therefore, Chief War Eagle [the Crow name bestowed upon General Harbord], my heart goes out to you because you, too, are a great warrior, who have done great service for our country. On behalf of my people, I invite you into the Crow tribe—the highest honor within my power.

"And as the snows of coming winters go by, I hope you will keep in mind the needs of my people in their struggle to be better Americans.

"May the Great Spirit permit your moccasins to make tracks in many snows is my prayer. I have spoken." The eloquence of the chief stirred every heart.

General Harbord's reply was addressed to the Crow people and was interpreted by John Frost, sentence by sentence. It follows in part:

"Seven years ago this November your great Chief Plenty Coups and I were associated in the ceremonies of the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery at Washington, and the world will never know whether that soldier who died in defense of our country was of your blood or mine—all that we shall ever know is that he died as a warrior should die, and is forever enshrined in the memory of his countrymen.

"You are living side by side with your white brothers on the land occupied by your ancestors. Your children, born in houses instead of tepees, go to school with the children of your neighbors. You have been made citizens of the United States with all the responsibilities and privileges that go with that qualification; you have a voice in the selection of your State, county, and national officials and in making the laws of your country. You must be prepared by industry and education to hold your own with your white neighbors in the battle of modern life, where the railroad has replaced the war-trail, the primary is held instead of the council,

and the Crow has become a citizen instead of warrior, and rides a motor-car instead of a war-pony.

"The World War brought ten thousand Indians into the armies of our country. I had the honor to serve with some of them in the American Expeditionary Forces, and I know of no case where an Indian was not a good soldier and true to the traditions of his ancestors. Indians also bought more than twenty-five million dollars worth of liberty bonds, and subscribed liberally to the Red Cross and kindred war philanthropies. Yours is a record of which men of any race might be proud. It can never be forgotten by my people, and it must not be forgotten by yours.

"So much for the changes in life, duties, and responsibilities that have come to you since Plenty Coups became your chief. It is fitting that in commemoration of all of this, he should give to the people of the United States, and particularly the people of Bighorn County, red as well as white, this land on which he has spent so many useful years. It is the climax of a life devoted to his people and to the country in which we all live. With the authority of the Department of the Interior of the United States Government, I accept this gift, and dedicate it as a park to the memory of Plenty Coups and the great Crow nation, oldtime friends and allies of the Great White Father, and now his trusty citizens and our fellow countrymen."

Superintendent Asbury, who had general charge of the affair, made a brief talk on the plan outlined by Chief Plenty Coups for his gift of the park (forty

PLENTY CROWS (Rev. John Frost), DICK WALLACE,
WHITE MAN RUNS HIM, AND REV. W. A. PETZOLDT

acres) and the one hundred and sixty-acre farm, the revenue from which is to maintain the park perpetually. He also left with the chief a copy of the deed from the chief to the government. The adoption of General Harbord into the Crow tribe followed. He was given the name of War Eagle.

As a memorial of the lifelong friendship of Plenty Coups for the whites and his early service as a scout under General Crook, a one hundred and ten-mile stretch of the Custer Battle-field Highway, lying between Billings, Montana, and the Wyoming State line, has been dedicated as the " Plenty Coups Trail."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, John Frost repeated the Lord's Prayer using simultaneously the English and the Indian sign languages.

XII

"MY BROTHERS THE SIOUX"

"God had his own plans for me."

For many months prior to September, 1928, preparations for an unusual gathering of Crows at Lodge Grass had been in progress. The Chivers Memorial Chapel at last was ready to be dedicated to replace the small mission destroyed by fire three years ago. The site for the new mission is the gift of the Indians. The building is equipped as a tribal community center with a chapel of colonial design, Sunday-school rooms, club-rooms, recreation-hall, residence quarters for two women missionaries, two guest-rooms, and a room for the exhibition of Indian art and handicraft. The pews in the chapel are named in honor of different tribes of North American Indians. The ten memorial windows, of colored art glass, portray episodes in the lives of men and women noted for disinterested service in behalf of Indians—John Eliot, Roger Williams, David Brainerd, William Penn, Isaac McCoy, Marcus Whitman, the Williamsons, Bishop Hare, the McBeth Sisters, and James S. Murrow.

Gifts to complete the building came from thirty-two States and four foreign countries; from churches and Indian tribes in other denominations as well as the one sponsoring the enterprise; from Jews,

Greeks, and other racial groups; from government and railroad officials, corporations, commercial clubs, stockmen, ranchmen, pullman conductors and porters, tourists, "dude ranch" guests, and local merchants.

To attend the dedicatory services the Crows came in from Wyola, Reno, Crow Agency, Black Lodge, Upper Bighorn, and Pryor and erected their tepees for the encampment.

There were impressive features to mark each session of the three-days' program. The prayer of dedication was offered by White Arm, first convert among the Crows, whose generosity and that of his wife made possible a shelter for the Petzoldts when they arrived on the reservation nearly twenty-five years before. The "Big Jesus Meeting" conducted by the Crows gave opportunity for a spontaneous outpouring of gratitude, petition, exhortation, and joy, in songs, prayers, and testimonies.

On "Citizenship Day," the Governor of Montana, Hon. J. E. Erickson, delivered the principal address following which a thousand persons, red men and whites, were entertained at a barbecue dinner prepared by the whites.

Prominent among the Crow Indians present at all of the ceremonies was the aged White Man Runs Him, only survivor of the six scouts who accompanied Custer on his fatal dash upon the camp of Sitting Bull. While he has been friendly in his attitude toward the mission, White Man Runs Him stedfastly had refused to enter the "Jesus Road" until recently when he declared that for many years

a cloud had obscured his vision of the true way. He prays often in public, expressing the hope that God will grant him a few days more of life that he may spend them walking down the "Jesus Road" in company with his wife who has been a Christian for many years. White Arm was among those who personally invited the old warrior to accept Jesus as his Saviour. The striking form and noble features of White Man Runs Him as he stood to present Governor Erickson with a war-shirt and to confer upon Missionary Petzoldt his own name, will not readily be forgotten. With the old chief was his son, John, who has declared his purpose to become a minister of the gospel.

The old warrior, who has taken the name "Morning Star," in his "give-away" ceremony, said: "I want the public to know that we appreciate the work Brother Petzoldt has done here. It is an unusual thing for a man to give his name away. I want the Crows to witness that I have given my name away to Brother Petzoldt, and that they are to call him White Man Runs Him."

The Indian Council Around the Cross of Christ, led by Rev. John Frost (Plenty Crows), was participated in by the Crow Christian leaders and visiting Indian ministers and laymen from the Sioux, Cheyenne, Gros Ventre, and Cherokee tribes. The National Y. W. C. A. was represented by Miss Dorothy Stevenson, Cherokee, a graduate of Oberlin. The addresses during this council revealed an encouraging development in Indian Christian leadership. Its climax was reached when Iron Moccasin,

a Sioux pastor, ceased speaking. John Frost stood beside him.

"Friends, I want to speak a few words," said the Crow pastor. "When I was a boy I made a vow to the Great Spirit that I would have as my life purpose the avenging of the death of my father who was murdered by the Sioux. For many, many years my heart was filled with hatred. Whenever I thought of the Sioux the desire arose within me to fulfil my vow. But God had his own plans for me." John placed his arm around the visitor. "I thank God," he concluded, "that I can now call this Sioux my brother."

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